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4 SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE
5 JANUARY 6TH ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL,
6 U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
7 WASHINGTON, D.C.

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11 INTERVIEW OF: ALYSSA FARAH GRIFFIN

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15 Friday, April 15, 2022

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17 Washington, D.C.

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20 The interview in the above matter was held via Webex, commencing at 10:07 a.m.

21 Present: Representatives Aguilar, Schiff, and Kinzinger.

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2 Appearances:

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5 For the SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE

6 THE JANUARY 6TH ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL:

7

8 [REDACTED], STAFF ASSOCIATE

9 [REDACTED], INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

10 [REDACTED], PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER

11 [REDACTED], INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

12 [REDACTED], CHIEF INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

13 [REDACTED], INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

14 [REDACTED], INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

15 [REDACTED], PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER

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18 For ALYSSA FARAH GRIFFIN:

19

20 CHARLES COOPER

21 Cooper & Kirk

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2 [REDACTED] Good morning. This is a transcribed interview of Alyssa Farah
3 Griffin conducted by the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on
4 the U.S. Capitol pursuant to House Resolution 503.

5 At this time, I'd like to ask the witness to please state her full and spell her last
6 name for the record.

7 Ms. Griffin. Absolutely. Alyssa Farah Griffin; Farah, F-a-r-a-h, Griffin,
8 G-r-i-f-f-i-n.

9 [REDACTED] Thank you, Ms. Griffin. Nice to see you again. Thank you very
10 much for being here.

11 Counsel for Ms. Griffin, Mr. Cooper, could you please identify yourself? And we
12 don't need to spell your last name.

13 Mr. Cooper. Charles Cooper, I'm with the law firm of Cooper & Kirk,
14 representing Alyssa here today.

15 [REDACTED] Great. Thanks, Mr. Cooper.

16 So this will be a staff-led interview. If members of the select committee decide
17 to join, they, of course, may also participate and choose to ask questions. We will try to
18 identify them if they join the interview and periodically stop and give them a chance to
19 participate.

20 My name is [REDACTED] I'm chief investigative counsel for the select
21 committee. Also with me today from the committee are [REDACTED]
22 investigative counsel; [REDACTED] senior investigative counsel; and [REDACTED]
23 who's a member of our professional staff. And I see that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED] two other lawyers who work on our committee, are observing as well

25 I don't think we have any members at this point, but, again, I'll note them if they

1 come.

2 There's an official reporter who's transcribing the record of the interview. Please
3 wait until each question is complete before you begin your response. I'll try to wait until
4 your response is complete before asking another question. The reporter, of course,
5 can't record nonverbal responses, such as shaking your head, so it's important that you
6 answer each question with an audible, verbal response.

7 We ask that you provide complete answers based on your best recollection. If
8 the question isn't clear, please ask for clarification. And if you don't know the answer,
9 just simply say so. But don't hesitate to ask us to repeat or rephrase a question if it's not
10 clear.

11 This is a voluntary interview. You've not been subpoenaed. And although the
12 interview is not under oath, I just want to remind you that it is unlawful to deliberately
13 provide false information to Congress. That is not a Ms. Griffin-specific admonishment;
14 that's something we tell all witnesses.

15 Do you understand that, Ms. Griffin?

16 Ms. Griffin. Yes, I do, thank you.

17 [REDACTED] Okay. Great. And then, logistically, if -- let us know if you need
18 a break, if you need couple minutes or longer. If you ever want to have an offline
19 discussion with Mr. Cooper, we can do this at the pace that you desire. So just let us
20 know if you need a break.

21 Ms. Griffin. Wonderful.

22 [REDACTED] Okay. Any other -- any questions before we get into it?

23 Ms. Griffin. I think I'm ready to go.

24 [REDACTED] Okay.

25 Mr. Cooper. Same here, [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED] All right. Thank you.

2 All right. [REDACTED] I think you're going to take the first part. Go ahead.

3 EXAMINATION

4 BY [REDACTED]:

5 Q Well, Ms. Griffin, thanks again for being here today. To begin, can you just
6 give us a brief overview of your professional background, including before you joined the
7 administration and your time throughout the Trump administration?

8 A Yes, absolutely. Dating back -- I'll try to go at least to -- with what's
9 relevant. So I, in about 2014, joined the U.S. House of Representatives as
10 Mark Meadows' press secretary when he represented North Carolina's 11th District. I
11 served in that role for about 2 years, was promoted to communications director for the
12 Congressman.

13 And then while I was working with him, he and other Members of Congress
14 formed the House Freedom Caucus, and I interviewed to be the communications director
15 for the Freedom Caucus. Got that job. So I served as communications director for the
16 House Freedom Caucus under Chairman Jim Jordan. And then when Jim Jordan termed
17 out as chairman, Mark Meadows was elected chairman, so I served as his -- as
18 communications director in that capacity as well.

19 I was in that role through the 2016 election. I'll mention for the record, because
20 this may -- this may be relevant later on. During the 2016 election, I was offered a job
21 on the Trump campaign by Jason Miller, and I declined it, stayed with the House Freedom
22 Caucus until about mid-2017, at which point I sought -- I met Mike -- Vice President
23 Pence's team. They had had their press secretary depart and reached out to me about
24 coming on as press secretary.

25 So I was hired September 2017 as Vice President Pence's press secretary, as well

1 as a special assistant to President Donald Trump. It's a technical term. It's a
2 commissioning status within the White House.

3 I served in that role for 2 years with Vice President Pence before I moved to the
4 Department of Defense, where I was the press secretary for the Pentagon, and deputy
5 assistant to the Secretary of Defense for media affairs. I was there for just under a year
6 when I was asked by then-White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows to go back to the
7 White House and serve as White House communications director.

8 Initially, I went over on detail from the Department of Defense, meaning I still was
9 a DOD employee. They were paying my salary. And there was supposed to be a
10 90-day period I was going to the White House to kind of help them get some things in
11 order dealing with coronavirus.

12 Ultimately, I extended that detail and then went permanently to White House
13 payroll, and stayed through the election. And then I resigned on December 4th. I had
14 tried to resign a few days prior, but Congressman Meadows asked me to wait it out a little
15 longer, but I ultimately left for good on December 4th.

16 And now I'm in the private sector. I'm a CNN contributor, among other things.
17 But I think that should answer the question.

18 Q So thank you for that.

19 [REDACTED] And just to note for the record, Mr. Schiff, a member of the
20 select committee, has joined.

21 Welcome, Mr. Schiff, and thank you for joining us.

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q And thank you, Ms. Griffin, for that background.

24 Just to make sure I have the dates right, so were you in the House, it seems like,
25 for about 2 years? Is that right, or a little over 2 years?

1 A A little longer than that. 2014 to about the end of 2017. Early 2014 to
2 the end of 2017. So about 3.5 years.

3 Q And in your time in the House, you said you worked under Mr. Meadows and
4 Mr. Jordan?

5 A Yes. And just to elaborate on that a bit more, because as the Freedom
6 Caucus comms director, I worked for all the members of the Caucus, which it was a
7 different membership than it is then, but I primarily -- than it is now. But I primarily
8 worked for the board. Mick Mulvaney was a board member. If I recall, Ron DeSantis,
9 Congressman Duncan, and Justin Amash were the board members.

10 Q Okay. And then you joined the White House working for the Vice President
11 around September 2017. Is that right?

12 A That's correct.

13 Q Perfect. And then you went to DOD and back to the White House around
14 April of 2020. Is that right?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Okay. And did you say your title was communications director in the White
17 House?

18 A Yes. This is a bit of a -- this is a little bit confusing. I was originally
19 brought in as director of strategic communications. This is probably more information
20 than you guys need, but originally, the plan was to have me come in that role.
21 Stephanie Grisham was going to stay as communications director and Kayleigh McEnany
22 was going to be press secretary. Not a structure that makes any sense, but regardless.
23 So that was what I was officially hired, and my commissioning papers said that.

24 When I left the DOD detail and stayed in a permanent role, the title was simply
25 changed to communications director.

1 Q Okay. And that is what I was going to ask, because I've seen some
2 reporting, director of strategic communications, but I was aware that Ms. Grisham had
3 communications director but she had left that role. So I wasn't sure if there was a
4 distinction in terms of responsibilities or workload.

5 A And not really. From it -- so -- and Stephanie left before I ever -- left to the
6 East Wing to the First Lady's team before I ever started in the White House. So from the
7 time that I was serving with either titles, I was overseeing what was effectively the
8 portfolio of the White House communications director.

9 Q Thank you for that.

10 So how about we go a little bit more into your responsibilities as, I guess,
11 communications director in the White House.

12 A So we -- I -- I had a team of about 25 people under me. We had a media
13 affairs team, a regional communications team. Basically, I oversaw most White
14 House -- all White House bookings. I oversaw Cabinet communications, so, you know,
15 we would coordinate on messaging between -- from the White House to the Cabinet. I
16 would talk to all the Cabinet spokespeople very regularly.

17 We did rollouts for -- for policies that we would announce, which, you know,
18 would be everything from setting up the backgrounders beforehand to creating the
19 talking points before, and briefing surrogates around it. And then we had a surrogate
20 operation.

21 All -- it was -- my -- I would say my team -- the White House comms shop was
22 probably fairly traditional. Like, I compare it similar in the sense of the division of duties
23 probably to a leadership office on Capitol Hill. The one thing that was very unique in
24 this White House was I oversaw probably a -- not officially, but a larger portion of press
25 than I -- than traditionally the White House comms director would, simply because

1 Kayleigh was charged by the President to basically be the spokesperson, so doing
2 briefings and doing television. But I oversaw a lot of like fielding inquiries from
3 reporters, talking to the press.

4 I had an open-door policy with the White House press corps. So any given day,
5 I'd have, you know, a dozen reporters in my office that I would background or talk to on
6 the record.

7 But, yeah, and I would say, during this period, obviously COVID was probably the
8 biggest focus. But, you know, it's similar to Congress; you're dealing with whatever pops
9 up in front of you.

10 Q And I can only imagine what it was in any administration in that position, but
11 much less during the beginning of the pandemic. You picked quite a time to join.

12 A Yes. It was -- it was challenging. And I just mention for the record,
13 because DOD was my -- being the Pentagon press secretary was my dream role, and I had
14 huge -- huge questions about walking away from it. But I've always felt compelled
15 toward public service, and what I weighed in my mind was we were hit with a global
16 pandemic. We were seeing, you know, horrifying projections. I remember the first
17 time that we saw projections, we'd have a million deaths, which we actually have come
18 fairly close to with about 700,000.

19 But all that to say, when I was asked to go to the White House, the motivating
20 factor for me was, if I could even kind of help, I wanted to. I knew that -- I -- I
21 intentionally never worked directly for Donald Trump before. I declined an
22 opportun- -- actually, declined multiple opportunities to. But I felt like, if I could be
23 helpful, I should. And it was a wild 8 months.

24 Q And just to build off of what you just said, were there specific concerns you
25 had about working in the White House or was it more that you, you know, working for

1 DOD was your dream job and you wanted to continue working there?

2 A Listen, I think most of what has publicly been written about those 4 years in
3 that West Wing is more or less accurate. I was -- having worked for Vice President
4 Pence, granted, we were -- I was based in the Eisenhower Building, but I would, you
5 know, be walking daily to the West Wing to meet with the Vice President. I got a sense
6 of the chaos.

7 It was always notoriously a West Wing without structure, where basically anyone
8 could walk into the Oval or the President's personal dining room. There -- and especially
9 for someone like me, I mean, Pence ran a traditional operation and team. And then
10 DOD is extremely hierarchical and structured.

11 So going in knowing that you're walking into something -- I mean, it was the wild
12 west. There -- and just candidly, too -- and you -- this will surprise absolutely no one on
13 this conversation. A lot of very good, more senior people decided not to go into this
14 West Wing. So you had a lot of people with not the relevant experience needed for the
15 jobs they were doing. And it translated near daily in different, you know, things where
16 you would just -- just basic levers of how government works didn't seem to be
17 understood by some very senior staff.

18 It was -- it was a huge challenge. I can spend the rest of my life questioning if I
19 ever should have left DOD, but here we are, and I'm happy to help you all.

20 Q And going off of that, we've heard from others that it -- there wasn't really
21 much of a structure. How did that play out, if at all, in terms of what messaging -- and
22 you had significant senior experience in communications before. How did that -- how
23 was your experience in the White House developing messaging?

24 A It was -- I actually once said on TV that, like, my job was basically an
25 oxymoron. Like, being White House communications director under Donald Trump, it's

1 just not something that really effectively existed. I -- you would go in every day and
2 have the best-laid plans that you could, you know, whether it's a policy rollout, whatever
3 it might be; and whatever he tweets -- decides to tweet that morning would derail
4 everything.

5 My -- I went in -- I was either naive, or it was my own hubris, or maybe a
6 combination of the two, thinking that I could bring the experience I had from DOD -- I had
7 50 public affairs officers report to me and had structure and processes for how we did
8 things. And I thought, if I could just professionalize the communications and press
9 operations, this White House could work better than it -- I had seen it work for the last
10 3.5 years.

11 But the reality is it's -- the principal is what matters, and he was a complete wild
12 card. You never knew what he was going to do, what he was going to say, and that
13 could throw everything off course.

14 The other thing is -- is he -- he's a product of his advisers. I mean, staff is
15 everything in these jobs, and someone could put something in front of him and it could
16 completely change his mind on something. This is anecdotal, but it will kind of capture
17 it for you. I remember, not relevant to January 6th, but I'd heard Jim Jordan was in the
18 West Wing and Matt Gaetz was with him, and I still had a good relationship with Jim at
19 that point, so I decided to go and say hi to him. And I'm waiting outside of the Outer
20 Oval with Gaetz and Jordan, and Kayleigh McEnany was with me. And Jim and I are just
21 shooting -- shooting the crap. He was an old boss of mine. And Gaetz has this folder.
22 And I said, you know, what is that?

23 And he pulls it out. It's conspiracy theories about Joe Scarborough murdering his
24 intern. And I said, Please do not bring that into the West Wing -- or to the Oval Office.
25 We were literally outside of the Outer Oval. And just -- as I'm saying that -- I said, You

1 cannot put that in front of the President, he -- he gets ushered in. And sure enough,
2 within -- by the next morning, the former President is tweeting wild conspiracy theories
3 about a cable news host, you know, allegedly murdering his intern.

4 So that gives you a sense of, like, just kind of chaos. I -- I do -- I think it's worth
5 noting for the record, I had an incredibly professional team. Everyone that I hired or
6 was hired before me had had Capitol Hill experience or experience in a governor's office,
7 which was important to me. But you could do, you know, the most exceptional policy
8 rollout or surrogates operation, but if he's talking about God knows what over here, that's
9 just going to derail everything.

10 And the one other thing I would just note, because I know you guys are talking to
11 a lot of formers, it was -- I was most shocked in my second time in the White House by
12 how much his own staff, I'd say, worked against him. I mean, I worked with -- let me
13 rephrase that. I would work against him if he was doing something bad. I'd try to give
14 him better counsel and get him somewhere. But staff around him were constantly
15 dealing with their own petty agendas. They're interfighting among themselves, leaking
16 against each other in press.

17 I'd often felt like my operation and the Domestic Policy Council seemed like the
18 only ones who were doing actual work, which was just kind of stunning to me.

19 Q Thank you for that background, including the anecdote.

20 So in that kind of situation, it seems like maybe you'd want like a gatekeeper.
21 Was there someone in the White House that you felt like acted as a gatekeeper or did you
22 yourself try to take on that role to prevent maybe some harmful information or
23 unproductive information getting to the President?

24 A I mean, the role should have been and was the chief of staff,
25 Mark Meadows. But it -- it -- I never -- in the chiefs of staff that I saw, I never saw

1 anyone do it effectively. Sometimes Meadows would be an ally and would help, like,
2 stop certain things. But then other times, he would either be just nonexistent in the
3 West Wing, would be on Capitol Hill doing something, or he would just let things slide.

4 I mean, very briefly, again, anecdotally, I was in the Coronavirus Task Force
5 meeting where the -- the briefing was first briefed that led to the injecting bleach
6 comment that was made on national television. It was some folks from Fort Detrick and
7 DHS that briefed it to the Vice President, said, you know -- and the Vice President thought
8 this is interesting, you should brief it to the President.

9 I tried to stop it outside of the Oval Office, because I knew the President was
10 willing to go on national television, have not been able to properly digest what the report
11 was indicating, and say something stupid or dangerous to the public. And I went to
12 Mark Meadows, and I said, Sir, this is going to blow up in our faces. He's not ready.
13 Like, what are we encouraging? Are we saying like, you know, go buy a humidifier? Do
14 we want to put a run on humidifiers? Or turn your heat up to 95 degrees. Like, it just
15 didn't make any sense. And Meadows overruled me, and we got the injecting bleach
16 thing. So it was -- the point being it's -- it was hit or miss.

17 Jared Kushner was, to some degree, a gatekeeper, but Jared was very -- he chose
18 his battles, and he would disappear for other ones and want to be nowhere near them.

19 But, long story short, it is the flattest organization I've ever worked in. I would
20 see press assistants in, like, the President's personal dining room and not know how they
21 got there. So like -- and a press assistant being a very junior staffer.

22 Q Okay. And I know you mentioned earlier about you would have, you know,
23 briefing documents, you'd be ready to go, policy agenda, the President would tweet
24 something, and it would throw everything up in limbo.

25 Is it fair to say, then, it often was, in terms of messaging, reactive to what the

1 President was thinking, tweeting, saying publicly?

2 A Yes, to some degree. I would say my operation, less so. Unlike a
3 traditional White House, we kind of had comms and press siloed, with the exception
4 of -- because I'd worked in press for the prior decade, I had good relationships with
5 reporters. But, like, Kayleigh tended to deal with the reactive stuff of the day and would
6 be -- you know, would have to go on TV and explain it, do a briefing, or like walk it back
7 on Twitter.

8 I tended to try to keep my operation in the lane of, like, the long term, but
9 I -- there were -- I -- all that to say there were also many, many times that I was the
10 person having to run in to the President and say, You've got to walk this back. Here's a
11 draft tweet, here's a draft tweet.

12 But, generally, that technically was Kayleigh's lane.

13 Q That's helpful. For -- in terms of the tweets, was there any -- from what
14 you could see, was there any sort of process for review, composing, or was it, I guess, a
15 mix of both? If you have any insight into how the tweets happened.

16 A So it was a mix. So Dan Scavino would just literally sit all day in a back chair
17 in the Oval Office, or, if they were in the dining room, in a certain chair. He was always
18 shadowing the President with his laptop. And often you'd be in the middle of, like, a
19 meeting on a certain topic, and the President would just start to dictate a tweet to Dan,
20 down to the spelling and the punctuation and everything. So that's one way tweets
21 would come about.

22 I was never sure how the retweets did, because it was usually in the morning that
23 he would do like a -- you know, go on a retweet storm. And I wasn't sure -- I think that
24 was him directly.

25 And then other times, staff would -- I would sometimes draft tweets for him,

1 usually like policy pronouncements. They wouldn't get nearly the engagement. So
2 some of it would be that too. I'd either give it to the President -- I mean, and more
3 often than not, the less exciting ones wouldn't make it out. But like one example, I -- I
4 gave him a tweet about not defunding Stars and Stripes magazine, and he tweeted that
5 out.

6 But like -- but I actually -- that's actually relevant. It kind of gives you a sense of
7 there's no policy process in the White House. That was kind of a -- something I had
8 championed since I was at DOD, because they'd X'd out funding for Stars and Stripes.
9 And this is a little shady of me, but I basically was just like, well, if I can get the President
10 to change his mind on it, and I just walked in and gave him a tweet, and he tweeted it out.

11 So, all that said, like, that was about how easy it was to make major policy
12 pronouncements if he was on board with it.

13 Q Would Mr. Scavino have to sign off on all tweets as well or could it just be
14 President Trump at times?

15 A Sometimes just President Trump. If Trump directly signed off, it didn't
16 need to go before Scavino, but Scavino was the in-between. Like, I would say I brought
17 most tweets to Dan, because it was, like, more kind of pro forma policy stuff that I knew
18 Trump would be like this is boring, but usually Dan could eventually get them out. But it
19 was a combination of the two.

20 Q And if you recall, would it be both the @realDonaldTrump and @potus
21 accounts for Twitter?

22 A No. So POTUS was completely run by White House Digital. I'd be shocked
23 if Trump even knew that account existed. So that was just like folks in the Digital Office
24 putting stuff out. Real Donald Trump was -- was his baby. That was him and Dan.

25 Q Okay. And who was -- if you recall, like, who headed the White House

1 digital team, had control of @potus?

2 A Ory Rinat, R-i-n-a-t -- I don't know how you say it -- and Kate Parnitzke,
3 although I believe she got -- may have gotten married, so her name might be different.
4 But Ory was the number one in White House Digital.

5 Q Do you know if Mr. Scavino had any involvement in Vice President Pence's
6 Twitter account or would it have just been the President's?

7 A He had zero with Pence's. Pence's was run -- Pence had -- I can't
8 remember if we had -- I think I still have access to Pence's Twitter, actually, but his was
9 run by his digital director. I don't even recall if Pence has access to his own account. I
10 think we made a decision early on it was better not to. But, no, totally separate.

11 Q Okay. And do you know whether Mr. Scavino had personal access to
12 President Trump's @realDonaldTrump Twitter account?

13 A Yes, he did.

14 Q And in your time as White House communications director, who did you
15 report to, whether, you know, officially, like on an org chart or just de facto, you reported
16 to?

17 A So on an org chart, this was -- Meadows promoted Dan Scavino to deputy
18 chief of staff for communications when he brought Kayleigh and I on. So, technically,
19 we reported to Dan. I -- effectively, that was not the case at all. I -- the only time I
20 even dealt with Dan was if I was trying to get the President to tweet something, like he
21 was -- he had no idea what was happening in my operation, who worked for me. Same
22 thing for Kayleigh's.

23 I would say most directly to Meadows, although Jared to some degree too. I
24 mean, again, this -- the organization made no sense. Jared decided to take an outsized
25 role on COVID, so anything coronavirus related, I would deal with Jared on. Meadows

1 had virtually nothing to do with COVID. So I would go to him for certain things, Jared for
2 others.

3 Q Okay. So it kind of depended on the issue?

4 A Yeah.

5 Q Okay. And then did you ever just go directly to President Trump for some
6 things?

7 A Yes, but usually only if it was a walk back of something. Like, if he -- I can
8 think of a number of occasions where he -- the most notable -- and, you know, just for the
9 record, this was the first time I thought about resigning and didn't. But after George
10 Floyd's murder and the social justice protests of summer of 2020 -- I think it would have
11 been June of 2020 -- he tweeted something along the lines of, when the looting starts,
12 the shooting starts.

13 And, I mean, I and every living, breathing person was horrified by it. But I -- I
14 walked into his office -- and we were getting crushed -- you know, even FOX News was
15 like, this is terrible. So I walked into the dining room and said, like, sir, like, you need to
16 walk this back. I was like, even your friends are coming after you.

17 And he was like, what are you talking about?

18 So he watches television on TiVo. So, like, a lot of times he's like 30 minutes
19 behind on the news and doesn't know what's actually happening in real time, and then he
20 has to fast forward to catch up, which is, anyway, bizarre. But -- so he fast-forwards and
21 realizes he is getting criticized.

22 So I brought him, like, the first walk back, which was along the lines of, what I
23 meant to say is, when there's looting, inevitably violence follows, and violence is terrible.
24 Like, everyone stand down and be peaceful.

25 And he said, no, no, no. That's not what I meant. What I meant is, like, when

1 the looting starts, people are going to get shot.

2 And I'm like, oh, great.

3 So I spent about the next 5 hours trying to get a version of a tweet that he
4 would -- that he would be okay with. He eventually tweeted something that was, I
5 wouldn't say, helpful, but it was at least somewhat deescalatory. But things like that, I
6 wouldn't wait on, like Meadows or Jared. I would go just directly to him.

7 But it was usually if -- I usually only -- I'll say this: I spent enough time around
8 the White House in my Pence role, I knew who Donald Trump was. I didn't vote for him
9 in 2016. I -- he was not someone I was trying to have a close relationship with.

10 And I remember even saying to Meadows when he hired me. I said, Let me be
11 your behind-the-scenes person. I don't want to be somebody who's an Oval Office
12 lurker and always around him. That ends terribly for everyone.

13 So I -- all that said, I interacted with Trump as minimally as I could. It was only
14 really when there was like a real problem that I'd go directly to him, which -- and, by the
15 way, he's put out statements criticizing me, and he even says that, like my nickname is
16 back-bencher, apparently, so --

17 Q We have a nickname too, so -- where was your office in the White House in
18 the -- in relation to the Oval Office?

19 A It's hard to -- very close. Probably about like a -- I don't know -- 15, 20-step
20 walk. We're in what we call upper press, which, like -- okay. There is the West Wing
21 lobby, where you would walk in. That's kind of the ceremonial entrance. Then
22 immediately would be upper press where my office and Kayleigh's office were. So we
23 looked out over Lafayette Park. And then if you just turn the corner, Outer Oval is there,
24 and the Oval is there. So it's very close.

25 Q And I know you mentioned a bit how you worked with Mr. Scavino. Was it

1 really just if you wanted to propose a tweet or work on some tweets that you worked
2 with Mr. Scavino?

3 A Yeah. Even -- even worked with might be an overstatement. I would go
4 to Scavino with predrafted tweets of things I needed the President to put out, and it was
5 almost always like a policy rollout that we would have done some big event on, and then
6 the President would have done nothing to amplify it. So it was usually stuff like that.
7 Like, hey, put this out on whatever it was that we just announced.

8 But spent very little time with him. He always had this sort of like, I'm so sorry,
9 I'm so busy kind of thing. And he was. He was constantly with the President. But,
10 yeah, I worked with him to the extent that I was trying to get tweets out.

11 Q You mentioned -- and I have kind of a visual in my mind of Mr. Scavino with
12 the President in -- you know, in the dining room, in the Oval Office, you know, with his
13 laptop preparing tweets.

14 We've heard from others that Mr. Scavino was President Trump's eyes and ears on
15 social media. Do you know if that's a fair characterization based on what you saw?

16 A Yes, very much so. I mean, from what I observed, he basically just spent all
17 day on Twitter and monitoring different accounts. And I never was able to decipher
18 what was a Trump retweet and what was a Scavino one.

19 If I may say one thing -- and Chuck -- he -- you know, keep me within boundaries.
20 I want to be careful not to speculate, because I observed a lot, but I want to make sure
21 that it -- what I'm sharing is, to some degree, speculation, but I'll offer it because perhaps
22 others can corroborate it.

23 But I got the sense that Dan also monitored some of the fringier platforms,
24 whether Gab, 8chan, Parler, et cetera. And I think he -- if I had to guess, but I don't
25 know this directly, he was who put some of the more fringy conspiracy theories in front of

1 the President, whether it was like QAnon-affiliated stuff and that sort of thing.

2 I just -- it was something that -- for me, I was always trying to figure out where he
3 would even find these things, and the best thing I could come up with was that Dan was
4 sort of the intermediary that put that stuff in front of him.

5 Q And, you know, completely -- we definitely want your best recollection. If
6 there are -- you know, if you can recall specific instances, that's helpful too, on why you
7 might think, you know, something was happening or a retweet might have come from
8 Dan Scavino, because, you know, how else would the President know of that website,
9 something like that. Those kinds of clarifications are helpful.

10 I know you mentioned Gab. You mentioned, I think, 8chan, Parler. Obviously,
11 it seems like Mr. Scavino was monitoring Twitter. How about Facebook and Instagram?

12 A Yeah, definitely Facebook. The President -- the former President was
13 obsessed with, like, the number of followers he collectively had between Facebook,
14 Twitter, and Instagram. So Dan was always, A, monitoring just to be able to tell Trump,
15 hey, you have this many followers. But, yeah, I think Facebook and Twitter were their
16 biggest focus.

17 Q Okay.

18 A Both for, like, receiving information, but also, like, how they put things out
19 on the platforms.

20 Q All right.

21 [REDACTED] And just want to note for the record and for you, Ms. Griffin,
22 that Mr. Kinzinger, member of the select committee, has joined us. Welcome.

23 Ms. Griffin. Hi, Congressman.

24 BY [REDACTED]

25 Q And to the extent you were able to tell when Mr. Scavino is monitoring these

1 sites, was it -- you know, do you know why he was monitoring the sites? Is it to see how
2 messaging's being picked up, how people are interacting with something that the
3 President tweeted? Any sense of that?

4 A I don't know. I think it might be a combination. I think -- I think they tried
5 to monitor trends and get ahead of like -- I think it was about keeping an eye on trends
6 within the base of the party. And I think it was to keep an eye on how -- how different
7 things Trump was doing played.

8 And just -- just an example was there were constantly, like, policy friction
9 over -- over, you know, different ideas and things that he supported. And one that was
10 big -- and I was actually -- I think I was still on the Pence side when they did criminal
11 justice reform, but there were a lot of folks within the West Wing who strongly
12 disapproved of it.

13 And I know -- this is a specific one that I know Dan would put in front of him, some
14 of the right-wingers who were criticizing it and saying he wasn't tough on crime and that
15 kind of thing. So he would basically, like, keep an eye on social media to see, like, how
16 things were playing. And then -- you know, and then share that with the President to
17 kind of like -- I don't know -- get a -- see if it changed his opinion.

18 Q And that's helpful.

19 How about YouTube? Do you know whether that was something that the White
20 House or Mr. Scavino, President Trump monitored?

21 A I have no idea, to be honest.

22 Q Okay. What about Reddit?

23 A Yeah. I think Reddit. I would put that into the, like, Gab, Parler, like, kind
24 of -- I don't mean -- little bit fringier outlets that he would keep an eye on.

25 Q Did you ever hear of -- there was a minor saying. It was like a sub-Reddit, I

1 think is what they're called, or a forum -- a community within Reddit called The Donald,
2 and it later became TheDonald.win? Did you ever hear any references to that?

3 A No, I didn't.

4 Q Okay. And I think you mentioned Parler? Was that one as well?

5 A Yes, I think so. I just -- I remember toward the -- toward the end, like in the
6 campaign days, that Parler became something that people were paying more attention
7 to, Dan specifically. But I don't know if they actively utilized it or if it was just that they
8 were, like, reading things on it.

9 Q Do you know whether Mr. Scavino would ever suggest certain language to
10 President Trump to use in tweets or messages, you know, in his communications to
11 supporters online?

12 A Oh, yeah, very much so. Yeah, Dan would always be giving him drafts and
13 ideas and suggestions on language. And he kind of nailed the Trump voice, which is part
14 of why I just -- I still can't tell, like, when it's a Trump tweet and a Dan tweet. But that
15 was a big part of his job, was -- was kind of laying out, you know, potential tweets for him.

16 Q Do you know whether Mr. Scavino ever talked to President Trump about
17 QAnon or suggested to President Trump certain language that has been adopted by
18 adherents to QAnon?

19 A I do not know that, whether he did. I suspect he did, but that would be
20 speculation.

21 Q Okay. And that's helpful, that distinction.

22 So you might have heard, during one of the debates, President Trump was asked
23 about comments about the Proud Boys, and he said, Stand back, stand by.

24 Did you ever hear or do you know if Mr. Scavino ever talked to President Trump
25 about the Proud Boys or language to use surrounding that group?

1 A So, no, but he must have. So I -- I actually didn't travel to that debate. I
2 watched it from home and was, like, stunned because it was just such a specific comment
3 to make. Like, stand back and stand by was very bizarre. So I -- I interpreted -- and,
4 again, this is speculation -- that somebody told him to use that specific language. And
5 just for the record, I had never even heard of the Proud Boys before then.

6 Q What about -- and I'll mention some other groups -- like Oath Keepers, Three
7 Percenters, First Amendment Praetorian? Ever hear those groups being mentioned?

8 A Never heard of any of those until, you know, closer to the day we're all
9 thinking about.

10 Q Do you know whether Mr. Scavino worked with people outside the White
11 House, such as like influencers or prominent personalities, to try to get the President's
12 agenda or certain messaging out there to go maybe viral?

13 A So I think he did, but, actually, Ory, who oversaw White House Digital, played
14 a pretty big role in doing that. Like, he -- and he hosted a number of, like, social media
15 summits. Like, he and Dan were a little bit like in competition with each other. But I
16 remember Ory hosted a few, and they brought some controversial figures. But I think
17 he -- to my knowledge, Ory was the bigger intermediary to the outside to, like, get people
18 to amplify things, the people like Jack Posobiec and some of these alt-righters. I think
19 that was more Ory. [Inaudible] but I know for a fact that Ory worked with those people
20 closely.

21 Q That's helpful.

22 How about, did you ever work with Stephen Miller and, more generally, the
23 speechwriting team during your time in the White House?

24 A Yes, regrettably. Yeah, the -- so speechwriting -- again, this White House
25 had no structure whatsoever, but in a traditional White House, would have reported to

1 me; it did not. I would have to battle to even see text of speeches before it went to the
2 President, which is very odd as White House communications director.

3 I tried to maintain a good relationship with Stephen solely so that I could see -- get
4 eyes on things before they got in front of him. I would say that probably only about half
5 of what -- of prepared remarks for the President I actually saw before they were given to
6 the President. And this -- a lot of what you have to understand too about this White
7 House is a lot of the -- it's a lot of people being territorial for the sake of it. Nobody had
8 confidence in their jobs and in their job security. So, like, I tried to make allies with staff
9 secretary, because they would generally get copies before, and they wouldn't even help
10 me see things.

11 So, all that said, Stephen was the head honcho of speechwriting, but then he
12 had -- I think there were probably four under him. There were the two main guys,
13 whose names I'm completely blanking on. But they would do a lot of the work, but it
14 was always Stephen that would brief the remarks to the President and would take the
15 feedback.

16 And we'd sometimes offer suggestions. I usually -- would primarily would be
17 coronavirus related that I would offer suggestions, like statistics to include or messaging
18 to include. But they kind of operated as their own sort of silo.

19 Q And in terms of Mr. Miller's staff, we're aware of a Vince Haley and Ross
20 Worthington. Were those the other staffers?

21 A Those were the two, yeah. Those were the two I speak of. And
22 four -- and they would travel with the President, so I don't mean to say they would never
23 interact with him. They would a decent amount, but Stephen was definitely the
24 primary.

25 Q So you mentioned how Mr. Scavino seemed to have captured President

1 Trump's voice. Would you say Stephen Miller was someone who also did that as the
2 primary speechwriter?

3 A Yes, very much so. And the former President had a lot of faith in Stephen.
4 For whatever reason, he thought that he was sort of, like, captured the voice of the base
5 of the party. So, yes, he definitely had the President's voice down. I would argue he
6 kind of defined the President's voice.

7 Q And what do you mean by that?

8 A I don't think that Trump had, like, any particular policy perspectives or, like,
9 at least nuance to those perspectives when he first ran for office. I think Stephen
10 helped define who he was, and I think, you know, told him, like, this is how you need to
11 be -- like, this is how you need to talk about abortion. This is how you need to talk
12 about the border. This is where you need to be on crime, et cetera.

13 I think he was -- he was, you know, a policy adviser as much as he was a
14 speechwriter, despite having no background in policy. And I think he was somebody
15 who would try to steer the President a certain direction and was extremely effective at it.

16 Q And --

17 A I'd argue not a good direction.

18 Q For the speeches, was there any sort of, from what you could tell, distinction
19 between, you know, White House official speeches versus, like, for the campaign once it
20 got into campaign season?

21 A No, because my understanding is I -- I'm pretty sure Stephen also wrote the
22 campaign speeches. I don't know that for sure. I mean, and I should note he was a
23 commissioned officer of the President. He was an assistant to the President, so he was
24 able to do that in his own time. But I'm pretty sure he was -- I don't think there was a
25 separate campaign speechwriter.

1 Q And you had mentioned briefly Ms. McEnany before. It seems like there
2 were -- she was more maybe on the reactive side in terms of on the press shop. How
3 else did you work with her or, maybe more generally, the press team during your time at
4 the White House?

5 A So Kayleigh was -- I think she saw her role as more what like a campaign
6 spokesperson would be or just what a spokesperson would be. So she -- and she
7 articulated to me that she thought it was her job to be around the President as much as
8 possible, to hear what he's thinking, to know what he's thinking, and then to be able to go
9 on TV and articulate that.

10 So that was -- I mean, that was what she did. She was constantly in every -- you
11 know, in as many meetings with him as she could be, and then she would do TV hits and
12 she would do briefings.

13 I actually handled -- she had a good but junior press team. Other -- with the
14 except -- Judd Deere, her deputy, is very, very effective. But I would support the press
15 team in like shaping stories and responding to things, because they're -- she often wasn't
16 even like read into what the rest of like the actual White House was working on or what,
17 like, the policy rollouts were and that kind of thing.

18 So I would say Judd Deere was probably doing the effective role of like what a Hill
19 press secretary would be, which is like fielding the inquiries from reporters, getting back
20 to them. And I would supplement that, like, when he couldn't get sign off from her, I
21 would kind of help with that sort of thing. But she was much more what I would call a
22 spokesperson than like a press secretary.

23 Q Okay. So little bit more of maybe the more public face?

24 A Yes. Yes. Exactly. Yeah.

25 Q And how about Mr. Meadows? Did you have regular meetings with him

1 about, you know, communication strategy, or how did you work with him?

2 A Yeah. So every morning at 8 a.m., we had senior, senior staff, which was
3 me, Meadows, Jared Kushner, Hope Hicks, Kayleigh, and Chris Liddell. And we'd
4 basically just connect for a half hour to go over like the President's day, what was, like,
5 playing in the news, what the messaging of the day was going to be, and then like if there
6 were announcements that were coming out.

7 It was not -- I wouldn't call it ever, like, particularly organized or like -- it -- but,
8 anyway, that was the core team that would meet in the morning. And then there was
9 like a standing senior staff once a week that would meet in the Roosevelt Room, and that
10 was like the head of every department, so that was probably closer to like 20 people.

11 But messaging, I -- I would work to some degree with Hope. But for the most
12 part, I kind of -- I think I said I worked with the Domestic Policy Council, the task force,
13 and then it was kind of just like me and my team.

14 Q What was --

15 A Meadows would occasionally -- I'll say this. Meadows would advise on
16 communications when it was stuff he cared about or was involved in, but he wasn't
17 necessarily -- unique to this White House, he wasn't involved in all aspects of what was
18 going on. And oftentimes he was more focused on like negotiations on Capitol Hill, for
19 example, or something he'd be doing, you know, with the President than like kind of the
20 day-to-day, like, this is what the White House is working on.

21 Q So you mentioned he was -- seemed like he was more interested or got more
22 involved on issues he cared about. What were some of those issues from what you
23 could tell?

24 A And, again, I want -- I mean, I want to be careful, because I don't want to,
25 like, characterize what -- I'll put it this way: It's like obviously coronavirus was the

1 biggest focus of 2020, like, bar none. That, and then getting relief -- economic relief
2 to -- to the American people. He completely took himself out of coronavirus response.
3 So he'd -- I don't know that he ever attended a task force meeting.

4 Jared stood up, in addition -- so I had that standing 8 a.m. -- the senior staff
5 meeting, but then Jared had a standing usually 9 a.m. meeting he hosted in the Roosevelt
6 Room with members of the task force, myself -- I led it from the comms
7 perspective -- that was dealing with like coronavirus response, and Meadows wasn't part
8 of that.

9 So, like, I know he engaged on like -- on -- the Congressman on the line will
10 remember this better than me, but I think he engaged in CARES negotiations and some of
11 the funding discussions on Capitol Hill, which some of us -- I definitely advised him to just,
12 like, let someone else handle that. There was too much chaos happening in the West
13 Wing for the chief of staff to be on Capitol Hill all day. I said -- I said, Let Steve Mnuchin
14 handle this. Let Larry Kudlow handle it and your leg affairs team. So that -- he, at
15 times, would be absent, and then things could go off the rails.

16 There's also, like, Jared and he were always maneuvering around each other, so
17 that complicated matters. But the long and short is he -- he would focus on -- he also -- I
18 mean, listen, he was focused on the reelection too. Not -- you know, in his own time. I
19 don't want to speak for how he was engaging, but, like, he -- I think his head was more
20 there than it was in like the problems we were working on.

21 Q And from what you could tell, was that the entire time you were in your
22 position as communications director or more once we got into, you know, post-election
23 day?

24 A It was odd. I'd say -- so, like, the first maybe month that Kayleigh and I
25 joined in April, Meadows was still hosting like a coronavirus-related meeting and was

1 involved in that, but then he kind of just completely dipped out on it. I think he was
2 dealing a lot more with like the job of baby-sitting Trump after that, which would
3 be -- Trump would be -- he would just, like, bark out kind of, like, tasks, like, go do this,
4 go -- you know.

5 So there was a lot of that. It was -- you know, he would talk to media figures to,
6 you know, try to get them to give us good coverage kind of thing. I -- I don't know that I
7 could speak well for what his day to day was, if that makes sense. But, like, he
8 wasn't -- he certainly wasn't -- he was very busy. He was always run ragged, but it
9 wasn't maybe -- like, I worked under Mick Mulvaney when I was with Pence, and Mick
10 was a bit more of a, like, chief of staff in the sense of, like, staff went to him. He knew
11 what people were working on. He had organized meetings. It was just different.

12 Q And --

13 Mr. Schiff. Could I interject for a quick question?

14 [REDACTED] Yes.

15 Mr. Schiff. Hi, it's Adam Schiff. 'Ms. Farah, thank you for appearing.

16 I just want to go back to something you were talking about a bit earlier, when the
17 President tweeted, when the looting starts, the shooting starts.

18 And I think you testified that you tried a number of times to get him to walk that
19 back with different iterations of different tweets. And, finally, if not helpful, you were
20 able to get him to tweet something that was at least, I think you said, deescalatory.

21 Can you explain that a little further? It sounds like what you were saying, but I'd
22 like to hear in your words, is that the President basically meant what he said in that first
23 tweet. As malignant as it was, that was really what he intended, and getting him to walk
24 it back was difficult.

25 Ms. Griffin. That's absolutely correct. And thank you, Congressman, for the

1 question. It was -- that was kind of stunning to me. So the tweet went out. We were
2 getting criticized even by what I'll call our friends. You know, FOX News was even
3 saying, you know what, this -- covering it in a negative way. And so I went -- and I
4 believe Kayleigh was with me, but I'm not positive, and -- to the back dining room and
5 said, you know, Mr. President, we're getting crushed. This is -- we need to -- I had
6 already drafted something that was along the lines of, you know, what I intended to say
7 was, when there is looting, inevitably violence also occurs, and we cannot have violence.
8 We need peace. We need people to stand down sort of thing.

9 And he said, No. What I meant is, if they're looting, we're going to start
10 shooting.

11 That's not verbatim, but that was very close to what he said. And I just
12 remember being stunned and knew I needed to go back to the drawing board, because I
13 was not going to be able to use that walk back.

14 I don't know where we ultimately landed. It'd be on the Twitter archives. But I
15 know that I went at least four times back after that to try to get him on board. And
16 what was -- what was challenging about that is this -- it became, like, you know, 5 hours.
17 So this is sitting out there from the American President for 5 hours at a very, you know,
18 hot-button moment where, like, we needed deescalation.

19 And I don't think what I've -- whatever we ultimately put out wasn't great, but it
20 was certainly an improvement of where he'd started.

21 Mr. Schiff. And did you get a sense from that conversation or others what view
22 the former President had about the use of violence either, in this case, to quell protests,
23 or -- or in the case of people who would be protesting his rallies or appear at his rallies to
24 disrupt? Did you get a sense from talking with him how he viewed the use of violence?

25 Ms. Griffin. Yes. I would say -- I mean, that moment was certainly indicative

1 that he felt like, if there was -- you know, that, for one, you know, that law enforcement
2 had just a right to react with violence. But one example that comes to mind that I think
3 stood out to me was, you guys will remember the reporting of, I believe it was The New
4 York Times, that the former President went into the bunker during this period of protests.
5 And he was furious that that got out. Someone had leaked it and whatever. But I was
6 in a meeting with him. I believe Attorney General Barr was there, I think
7 Chairman Milley and others. And he said, Whoever leaked that should be executed.
8 They're a traitor to their President. They should be executed.

9 And that, to me, I was, like -- I mean, that's just stunning, that it was just stunning
10 coming from him. But he thought very -- anything that, like, disaligned with him, he had
11 very strong opinions about. And he -- I mean, there's countless times where he talks,
12 like, knocking peoples' heads together. And he wanted to see -- after the George Floyd
13 murder, he wanted to see violence and shows of strength in the street.

14 And it was -- I give tremendous credit to Chairman Milley for actually like offering
15 him a solution and deescalating it, because he was talking about militarizing our streets
16 with Active Duty, and it was -- all of it to say, yes, this is a man who didn't shy away from
17 violence if it supported his causes, as we saw.

18 Mr. Schiff. And so when you say that he wanted to see violence, you're saying
19 that he wanted to see law enforcement literally shooting people during these protests?

20 Ms. Griffin. I think -- I want to be careful not to speculate, but I think -- I
21 remember the meetings leading up to it. There were at least two. One's been heavily
22 reported. But when he first talked about invoking the Insurrection Act, it was at a
23 meeting I was in. There were about 20 of us, including the Vice President, the Attorney
24 General. And he said, you know, we need to storm the streets. We need to -- we need
25 to, you know -- we need to storm the streets, was the language he kept using.

1 And it was -- it was Barr and Milley who ultimately kind of got him, A, to hold on
2 invoking the Insurrection Act, but to say that -- Barr chimed in to say something along the
3 lines of, you know, I was there for Rodney King in the nineties, and the second that you're
4 engaging in violence, it only escalates.

5 And then Chairman Milley said, I can do what you want to accomplish, which is
6 restoring peace and order in the streets, without using Active Duty, without using, you
7 know, a ton of Federal law enforcement.

8 So he left it there. But the sense I got from that meeting was he wanted this big
9 show of strength and of force.

10 Mr. Schiff. You know, your comment about him saying that whoever leaked that
11 should be executed brought back other comments he had made when he, for example,
12 referred to the Ukraine whistleblower as a traitor, and said there used to be ways we had
13 of dealing with traitors.

14 Do you think he was there also advocating execution?

15 Ms. Griffin. I mean, I can only go off his words, to be honest. It's horrifying.
16 I -- I mean, my jaw probably hit the floor when he said it, but, I mean, you've got to take
17 the President of the United States at his word, and he said, That person should be
18 executed.

19 And he tasked Meadows with finding -- this is actually important to an earlier
20 question. He tasked Meadows with finding the leakers, and he was obsessed with
21 finding that particular leaker. So Meadows played this -- spent a lot of time trying to,
22 like, figure out who was leaking things during this period.

23 But, I mean, I take him at his word. I would not be shocked, if we had come
24 forward and said it was this person, he wanted some sort of a -- a very serious response.

25 Mr. Schiff. Now, I don't know if this was during your time in the White House,

1 but there were occasions when, at his rallies, he would have a protester protesting
2 against him and he would suggest that someone in the crowd use violence against that
3 protester.

4 Did you ever have any conversations with him about trying to cut or fly or walk
5 back any of those comments?

6 Ms. Griffin. No. Those were before my time, and I was -- I was horrified by
7 them. The only time -- actually, I can give you a couple times that I tried to walk him
8 back from violent rhetoric. And the fact that this is even a thing is absurd. So the
9 George Floyd one.

10 Another -- you may recall he retweeted a video -- this was, again, summer of social
11 justice protests -- of what looked like kind of an elderly man who was knocked over by
12 law enforcement and was bleeding out from his head. It was horrifying.

13 Mr. Schiff. Yeah.

14 Ms. Griffin. And he retweet -- I believe retweeted something defending the
15 police or something. Long story short, like, any normal person who watched it would
16 have thought this is an absolutely horrifying display of, like, abuse of policing power, but
17 not Donald Trump.

18 And Kayleigh McEnany actually had to go to the podium and defend it and kind of,
19 like, doxed the individual and said, well, he had, you know, expressed anti-policing
20 sentiment and he was, like, pro-antifa, et cetera.

21 And I remember going in and saying to him -- I was like, sir, I don't care if he's -- if
22 he's, like -- it doesn't matter. Like, if he's pro-antifa, this is America. He shouldn't
23 be -- a 75-year-old man shouldn't be bleeding on the streets because of his viewpoints.

24 And he said -- and he just started rattling off some of the stuff that he had
25 retweeted and -- as a justification for it, and I couldn't get him to walk it back.

1 So that was -- that was one.

2 And George Floyd really, I mean, bothered me for the obvious reasons, but he
3 actually had sort of the natural response when he first saw the video, which was this is
4 horrifying. But he -- he kind of, I think, got -- as he does, he got radicalized by how he
5 saw some on the right respond to it. He would read the tweets, and he would -- and I
6 remember him saying, like, this guy was a drug addict, this guy was -- and it's like, well,
7 that should not matter.

8 So then his position continued to shift. And I remember talking him out of some
9 sort of a tweet about, like, his autopsy and that he'd been on drugs. I don't think the
10 tweet ever went out. But that -- that was kind of -- he -- he was very casual about
11 violence. He was very casual about, like, if somebody disagreed with him, that person
12 was the enemy. And it was just so black and white for him.

1

2 [11:05 a.m.]

3 Mr. Schiff. Thank you. I yield back

4 [REDACTED] Thank you, Mr. Schiff.

5 And wanted to note for the record that Mr. Aguilar, also a member of the select
6 committee, has joined us today.

7 Good morning.

8

BY [REDACTED]

9 Q Ms. Griffin, earlier you had, I believe, and correct me if I'm wrong, appeared
10 contrasted Mr. Mulvaney's exercise or management of his duties as chief of staff, who
11 you worked under, and also Mr. Meadows during your time in the White House. I was
12 wondering if you could explain a little bit more what you observed and how they
13 exercised their duties as chief of staff.14 A Yeah, sure. And I had worked for both of them in the House, because they
15 were both Freedom Caucus members. So I had relationships with both of them going in.16 Now, granted, I preface, I was on the Vice President's team when Mick was chief
17 of staff. So I probably was not working as closely with the White House chief of staff as I
18 did under Meadows.19 But Mulvaney tried to be a chief to the staff; meaning, he kept tabs on what each
20 department was doing. He would, I felt like, at least try to empower those departments
21 to, like, if there was a policy priority, they want to get in front of the President or, like,
22 wanted time to brief him on something.23 He tried to create a semblance of structure. It wasn't -- there was not always
24 structure. But I think people felt like they had a person who heard their voice when
25 Mick was there.

1 I don't mean to like -- there's -- I've got bigger things to criticize Mark Meadows on
2 than his leadership style. But I will say just like they're -- Meadows didn't know what
3 was going on in 90 percent of the building. And I just think from a leadership
4 perspective and when you're, kind of, running the free world, it's important to have that
5 backstop of somebody who knows: Policy is doing this, comms is doing this, the NSC is
6 doing this.

7 And that wasn't -- I mean, hires would be -- like, senior hire -- Jared would hire
8 very senior people without Meadows even knowing it happened. And then suddenly
9 Jared would have his new, like, collection of staff that he hired. Things like that.

10 Q Okay. How about with respect to telling the President what he wanted to
11 hear? Did you have any sense of where Mr. Meadows fell in that category versus Mr.
12 Mulvaney or John Kelly?

13 A Yeah. So I don't know that I saw the other chiefs interact with the
14 President that much. I had heard that Kelly was good at pushing back.

15 But I'll say this: Meadows always told the President what he wanted to hear.
16 And when he didn't have the answer that the President wanted, he would go and try to
17 make that answer a reality.

18 And, listen, the former President put a tremendous amount of pressure on him.
19 I remember shortly before the election he said, "If we lose North Carolina, you're effing
20 fired," to Meadows in front of a dozen people.

21 So he didn't make it easy to -- but he -- and he would constantly be giving him
22 unwinnable tasks, like capture the leakers. And Meadows would do his best to do that.

23 I'm sure there were times he pushed back on him, but I genuinely can't think of
24 one right now.

25 And I would say this. As staff, it was frustrating, because early on I thought that

1 he was kind of like the champion of, like, I can -- I will do this, I will take on your burden,
2 and go tell the President, no, we can't do this. But I just think he would tell you he was
3 doing that and then not.

4 And I say that only because there were a number of times I went to him and said,
5 you know, the President's -- well, I mean, the notable one I mentioned, the injecting
6 bleach, for example. Like, he's, "I've got this. I've got this." And then it ended up
7 going forward.

8 But there's -- there were -- I never saw evidence that he really pushed back on the
9 President.

10 Q Did you observe anyone in the White House exercise that sort of function of
11 a straight talk talker with the President?

12 A I'm trying to think.

13 Only in silos. Like, some of the NSC, like Robert O'Brien would on national
14 security matters. But he so infrequently was even having -- like, he wasn't needing to on
15 a lot of the things that you would usually need to push back on the President for.

16 I mean, I don't mean to pat myself on the back. I did on a number of occasions.
17 One that I think I've publicly shared, but I'm not positive, I walked into -- because I was
18 supposed to be the next meeting -- but I walked into a meeting that was Bill Stepien,
19 Jason Miller, Jenna Ellis, Stephen Miller, and Cassidy -- the one who worked for Jared
20 Kushner. I'm blanking on her last name. Cassidy something.

21 And Jenna Ellis and Stephen were telling the President that he should run the
22 birther playbook on Kamala Harris. They're, like, there's a legal argument that she's not
23 constitutionally qualified to be President. It was absurd.

24 And I immediately interjected. I said, you will, A, get crushed if you say this,
25 rightfully so, and that's not true. This is an insane take and you should absolutely not

1 listen to this.

2 He made one reference to it in a press conference that day and then never
3 brought it up again. So I'll count that as a victory.

4 I'm trying to think. There were a handful of times I tried to push back on things.
5 But like I said, we were not close. Like, we obviously knew who each other were. I was
6 with him daily. But we did not have any sort of a personal relationship. But I would try
7 to speak up if there was something that I felt like needed to be stopped in its tracks.

8 Q In that meeting that you just referenced, was this before election day, if you
9 can recall?

10 A Yeah. Before election day, yeah. And you'd be able to -- like, for the date,
11 you could google -- because I'm sure it was written up at the time, because he did make a
12 reference to her eligibility in, like, a press conference. But then he never did it again.

13 Q And in that meeting, you were the only one that spoke up and pushed back
14 against the message?

15 A Yeah. No one said a damn thing.

16 Another example, like, this is small, but I was on Marine One with him after some
17 sort of event and he wanted to go after Senator Ben Sasse for criticizing him. And I tried
18 to explain to him the concept of you will just elevate this if you tweet about it. Like, no
19 one's -- it's a random like Washington Examiner article, let it go, sort of thing.

20 And he said, yeah, okay, listen. And said he was listening to me and agreed and,
21 like, closed his phone like he wasn't going to tweet it. And then 15 minutes after he got
22 off the helicopter, he tweeted it.

23 So it's like a lot of things were kind of a lost cause with him, but I tried when I
24 thought it was worth it.

25 Q And it's on that theme of people he listened to, we've heard that Ms. Ivanka

1 Trump was someone that he did listen to when she gave suggestions.

2 Did you work with Ms. Trump at all during your time in the White House?

3 A I did. I always personally enjoyed working with her and her team. Julie
4 from her team was very professional and I enjoyed working with.

5 I would say this. I think people called on Ivanka when they needed to -- when
6 they had a hard time getting through to the President. I don't know that I saw a ton of
7 evidence that it changed outcomes.

8 There's some of these -- like, there's a handful of sort of myths that have been
9 created, and I don't know if it's like because people pushed certain PR or what, but there
10 was also this narrative that Hope Hicks could get through to him and push back on him.
11 I never once saw Hope Hicks ever push back on him. And that Ivanka was, like, the voice
12 of reason and could get him to change his mind.

13 I like Ivanka. She was very decent to me. But I never saw her change his
14 opinion on something.

15 And it was Ivanka, Hope, and Jared that convinced him to do the whole Lafayette
16 Square photo op and clearing the park with force sort of thing.

17 So I also -- I question this notion that she had sort of excellent judgment that
18 we -- I don't know. I didn't see her presence changing things for the better is my point.

19 Q I believe towards the beginning of our conversation, I think you had
20 mentioned that you worked also with at the Cabinet-level press secretaries, is that right,
21 in terms of creating a coherent messaging strategy?

22 A Yeah.

23 Q How did that work in practice?

24 A We had standing calls that I would talk to -- I would speak with the heads of
25 departments at the different agencies. I would say I probably, just because of how thin

1 we were spread, I did a lot of what we called the COVID Cabinet. So agencies that had
2 jurisdiction, so HHS, FEMA, DOD, et cetera, I would speak to them near daily.

3 The broader Cabinet -- like, to be honest, I didn't have time to talk to, like, USDA a
4 lot of the time, but I would do a regular check-in with them.

5 And then I had a separate national security standing call every day with the NSC,
6 DOD, and the State Department in the morning where I just speak to their senior
7 spokesperson and make sure -- and we would do it, it was a classified call, we would do in
8 the Situation Room -- just to make sure we were all on the same page and nothing was
9 going to catch anyone off guard.

10 Q In terms of these, the Cabinet-level calls that you had and communications
11 at that level, do you remember talking with them with any messaging related to the
12 election?

13 A No. We wouldn't have -- it just -- it wouldn't have been legal. We didn't
14 speak about the election. The closest I would say would be just messaging, like, touting
15 achievements. That was a big thing.

16 What's her name? Julia Hahn was -- she was like the director of research. She
17 worked under me. We had a challenging time working together. But she drafted a lot
18 of the talking points and she was actually pretty effective at it.

19 So we would send a lot of, like, here's achievements, feel free to amplify them,
20 but never -- the word "election" would never appear, vote, you know, any of that.

21 Q Okay. And with respect to the President, we've spoken a little bit how you
22 worked with him. Did you have regular meetings, standing calls with the President?

23 A So I met with him every afternoon. I was supposed to have a standing
24 morning call with him, but it very rarely happened. Or, yeah, basically, the chief of staff,
25 Meadows, had advised Kayleigh and I to connect with him around 7:30 every day by

1 phone ahead of that 8:00 a.m. meeting. I could count on one hand the number of times
2 that he actually took the call.

3 And nothing, not really anything unordinary, but we'd call through the White
4 House operator and he would decide in that moment if he felt like talking to us or if he
5 was doing something else.

6 I would almost every day have a pre-brief before he would do a press briefing,
7 because we were -- he was doing the fairly regular coronavirus press conferences. But
8 what was challenging is his scheduling team would give us, like, 15 minutes for those.
9 And the President didn't attend coronavirus task force meetings so he didn't know what
10 was going on, what we were doing, what his own administration was.

11 So it would really just be that he would go over his remarks, give feedback to
12 Stephen Miller, and then Kayleigh and I would kind of murder board him with the
13 questions the press were going to ask. And that was basically it.

14 And, by the way, that morning call eventually died and was replaced with he
15 started doing a standing call with Jason Miller and the campaign at that time.

16 And I think that actually happened fairly frequently, but I wasn't on it.

17 Q You've mentioned Hope Hicks a few times. What was her job, if you
18 remember, during your time in the White House, in that 2020 period?

19 A It was a weird sort of hybrid of roles. So, I mean, effectively she was a
20 scheduler. She oversaw the President's calendar. But there was also, like, he actually
21 also had somebody whose title was director of scheduling.

22 I think they brought her in in kind of an ambiguous role, and I'm not sure it was
23 ever totally clear what her role was. But it was supposed to be to get like a structured
24 calendar of events for him, but we so rarely -- on any given day, you would see like his
25 schedule in the morning, there'd be nothing on it.

1 So you guys understand, coming from Pence, we would have a month out
2 schedule that was almost full and, like, slight changes would come up. And then like day
3 of, I would have a line-by-line itinerary of literally his movements, who he's talking to,
4 what he's doing.

5 So it was -- and I don't mean this to be critical of her, I'm just -- if this helps what
6 you guys are doing, for whatever reason, she could never get an actual schedule on the
7 calendar. I think he was very -- he was difficult to schedule, because I, on a number of
8 occasions, went in with her when she presented, like, a big board to him of this is what
9 we have you doing and he'd say no.

10 She did factor into events. So if we were planning, you know, like he's going to
11 travel to this lab while we're making coronavirus swabs or something, she would kind of
12 lead those meetings and talk about the logistics.

13 But then she transitioned. So I was told that she was hired to be the in-between
14 between the White House and the campaign. But then coronavirus hit and that kind of
15 changed.

16 But I know she did a lot with the campaign toward the -- toward at least the back
17 half of meeting at the White House.

18 Q Do you know whether Ms. Hicks had any control on what could get on the
19 calendar, like say, no, he's not going to take that meeting; yes, he's going to take that
20 meeting?

21 A Yes, she did. That was -- yes, but she could be overruled by people. But
22 I'd say that was where her primary authority was, is she would -- she could tell other
23 departments he's absolutely not doing this. But she also to outside folks could usually
24 get them meetings with him.

25 Q And do you know who else or who would have -- who else would have

1 authority to say, yes, he's going to take that meeting or, no, he won't?

2 A It would be Hope, Jared, and Mark. And they were constantly in conflict
3 with each other about what he should do.

4 Q Do you know what role, if any, Outer Oval had in terms of managing the
5 President's schedule?

6 A More of -- Molly was more of, like, the execution side of keeping him on
7 time. I would say this. She was very close with the President, so I think she probably,
8 if he asked for something, like, get me this person on the phone or get me a meeting with
9 this person, she could make that happen and she wouldn't have to clear it with anyone
10 else.

11 But I think that's kind of standard. If something came directly from the
12 President, people didn't run it through other channels.

13 So she did have some authority in that regard. But like her day-to-day was
14 mostly making sure the right people were in meetings, that he was on time for things,
15 that he -- he would constantly shout things out, like, "Molly get me this person." He'd
16 brag about how she was the quickest person to get someone on the phone.

17 But, yes, she would've had some degree of scheduling authority.

18 Q And then you said the President actually had a scheduler, someone who held
19 that title?

20 A Yes. And he sat in Mark Meadows' office. And I apologize, I'm totally
21 blanking on his name.

22 Q Not a problem.

23 A Taller gentleman from Ohio.

24 Q So Ms. Hicks, she previously had -- I think she was the first person ever to
25 have the title of strategic communications director and she -- it's been reported that she

1 joked her job was not about strategically communicating with the press, but rather
2 strategically communicating with the President.

3 So I'm wondering if you viewed your job similarly.

4 A No. I don't think Hope Hicks and I approach our careers or the way we do
5 our work similarly at all, respectfully.

6 But, no, I never saw it as my job to be, like, an intermediary to him. I saw my job
7 as about communicating to the American public via the press corps, and if I needed to,
8 bringing him to the degree that I was capable to like a place that was helpful to the
9 broader administration.

10 But I, yeah, I've said it before, but, like, I raised my hand and swore one oath, and
11 it was to the Constitution and the U.S., not to Donald Trump, though he may need to be
12 reminded of that.

13 Hope and I did our jobs extremely differently.

14 Q And I appreciate that. That's helpful context.

15 So I know you don't have something to compare it to, but you did hold this
16 position in an election year, and I'm wondering if you could speak a bit about how that
17 impacted your job in the exercise of your duties, aside from it being a year of a pandemic,
18 then you throw in a chaotic election.

19 A Yeah. That's a great question.

20 So, yeah, the pandemic changed things. So my understanding -- and I have
21 friends who served in the Bush White House and who kind of advised me when I went
22 in -- but traditionally my understanding is the center of gravity in a campaign year tends
23 to shift to the campaign and like they're, on the communication side, they're really driving
24 the message and the White House is a bit more like pro forma, doing like the policy work
25 and the day-to-day of what a White House should be doing. But, the oxygen, the focus,

1 like, the President's focus would be over at the campaign.

2 That shift never really came and I think the pandemic was part of it. But also, to
3 the best of my knowledge, in a lot of prior administrations the top talent would also leave
4 the White House and go over to the campaign side and that kind of thing. That never
5 really happened either.

6 So I would say, like, his attention, he was very focused on COVID for about
7 2 months of me being -- "very focused," maybe that's too generous. But he was
8 marginally focused on COVID for the first 2 months I was there, like I said, like April to
9 May.

10 And keep in mind, this was the very scary time of COVID. You know, no one
11 really knew anything about where things were heading.

12 But I would say come about June, even a little before then, his energy and his
13 focus shifted. People convinced him to bring back rallies. He had that notorious Tulsa
14 rally.

15 And I think that was a big moment for him because he couldn't pack a stadium.
16 He didn't have the turnout he expected. And rather than take the lesson of it's a
17 pandemic, people don't want to be in a crowded stadium and, like, whatever, he instead
18 took it as we need to do more rallies, we need to focus more on the campaign side.

19 So his energy was there. He was focusing. I barely heard him talk about
20 coronavirus after that beyond how it would impact the election.

21 But the majority of us, I would say, with the exception of people who wore sort of
22 dual hats, like a Hope, were focused just on, like, the day-to-day of the White House.

23 I say all that, though, I did, I traveled to many rallies with him. We always had to
24 have, like, a comm staffer. I think Kayleigh did most of that, but I did a number of them
25 with him as well.

1 Q And that's helpful.

2 Did you ever have to wear those two hats, do any work with the campaign in your
3 own time --

4 A Yeah.

5 Q -- in 2020?

6 A Yeah. And I worked very closely with Scott Gast, who was the ethics
7 attorney, to make sure that we were always doing it aboveboard and in compliance with
8 the Hatch Act.

9 But I had a standing call with the campaign that -- about a daily call that would
10 basically be, I would run them through what we were working on that day and what our
11 message was and they would -- I don't know what the campaign did, to be honest, but
12 they would kind of tell me what they were working on and that was it. But I talked to
13 them fairly frequently.

14 Q And would the campaign ask you to push certain messaging that they
15 thought would be helpful in terms of polling for the election?

16 A A little bit, but just to be honest, this was not a sophisticated campaign.
17 That would have actually been like -- I remember Kayleigh and I offline after hours raising
18 to them, like, you guys clearly, surely, have messaged tested and know what's going to
19 resonate, like, what are the issues we need to be talking about. And they didn't have
20 good answers.

21 But one that's germane to this investigation that I do recall was at one point
22 getting a call from the campaign that we needed to get Trump to stop talking about
23 mail-in voting being bad.

24 I believe it was Jason Miller who delivered that message to me, but he's like we've
25 got to get him to stop with this, don't trust mail-in voting, it's fraudulent, all that,

1 because, of course, his path to victory would require people doing mail-in voting.

2 But honestly that's one of the only times I could remember them being this is -- I
3 don't know. I guess Jason from time to time would chime in. But I didn't really -- it
4 didn't change anything that we were doing.

5 We also -- sometimes, the campaign would signal to talk about coronavirus less.
6 That was something, a battle I always was dealing with is don't put the doctors on TV,
7 don't talk about -- just don't talk about coronavirus in general. It's not driving home a
8 message for us.

9 And so I had to kind of work around that. One of my solutions was I would put
10 the doctors on regional television because no one would notice, and I would just literally
11 put, like, Dr. Birx this studio that we had and she would do like 4 hours of regional TV
12 interviews in places that were having big outbreaks.

13 And at one point Kellyanne Conway told me do not put the -- she and Hope
14 cornered me in the Oval in front of the President and said, Alyssa, keeps putting the
15 doctors on TV. It's driving down our numbers. It's scaring people over COVID. You
16 need to tell her to not have the doctors on. And so the President told me point blank to
17 not have them on TV anymore.

18 So I got with Dr. Fauci and Dr. Birx, who I'm very close with and remain close with,
19 and said we're going to work around this, give me a little bit of time. And I went with
20 the regional media strategy. And then I would just start interspersing them back on
21 national media, and I'd get yelled at by Kellyanne and others.

22 Q And was Ms. Conway, she was in the White House at that time?

23 A Yes.

24 Q So you mentioned Jason Miller. Who else did you work with at the
25 campaign?

1 A Mercedes Schlapp. She was -- Jason was probably my counterpart, but
2 Mercedes would -- she had done my job previously, or the strategic communications side.
3 So she'd have a lot of ideas. I would generally have to push her off to other staff. But I
4 worked with her a little bit, I'd say.

5 Q Okay. What about Mr. Stepien, Bill Stepien?

6 A I basically never dealt with Bill. I would talk to him on -- like, we'd be on
7 the plane together and I'd ask him about polling.

8 I always found Bill to be serious and smart. He was very guarded, though. I
9 would have to pull teeth to get polling information from him and even the message
10 testing stuff. But, no, I didn't interact with him much.

11 Q So you mentioned Jenna Ellis earlier with respect to a meeting that
12 happened pre-election day. Did you ever work with her in connection with the
13 campaign work?

14 A Well, one story just for the record.

15 So when Meadows brought me to the White House -- well, he physically brought
16 me to the West Wing to ask if I would come back. He asked me to be press secretary.

17 I said no, I am not -- I would not be a good face for Donald Trump, I cannot defend
18 a lot of what he's doing, but I can professionalize the comms operation.

19 He said, okay, if it's not you, it's between Kayleigh McEnany and Jenna Ellis. And
20 I said, I mean, that's not an embarrassment of riches, but between the two, I would go
21 with Kayleigh McEnany.

22 My opinion of Jenna Ellis is -- she was at the campaign. I think she was at the
23 campaign. I never knew what her official role was.

24 The President really liked her. Everyone in the West Wing had the opinion that
25 she was a little bit, like, respectfully, she was a little bit crazy. She was a little bit kind of

1 off the reservation, had viewpoints that were out there, and she was unhelpful when she
2 got in the President's ear.

3 So when she would show up at the White House, it was a balancing act of, like,
4 you wanted to be friendly to her and nice because she was actually quite close with
5 Trump, but you needed to be cautious about what she might put into his ear.

6 We -- I think we were -- I would say we were friendly, but we never really -- I
7 wasn't sure what her portfolio was. We never worked together. She was one of those
8 sort of unofficial surrogates. But I noted she was pushing the Kamala Harris birther
9 conspiracy. I'm trying to think of some of others.

10 At one point she was really pushing for Trump to wade into the issue of
11 transgender women in sports, which I had mentioned to him. I was, like, this is not a
12 winner.

13 But she -- I dealt with her limitedly.

14 Q Do you know how she got into the President's orbit?

15 A So, no, I don't. But I remember even Mark Meadows was very skeptical of
16 her. So Mark Meadows and I share an old friend in a gentleman named Mike Farris who
17 was formerly the President of my college. He's a big, kind of conservative evangelical
18 leader and he's a very good man. He is not a Trump fan.

19 But he had warned Meadows about Jenna, and then he warned me about Jenna
20 as well, because I guess he employed her at one point and had to let her go, and just said
21 this is a person you should be very cautious with.

22 My understanding is Trump saw her on TV -- that was the biggest way to get into
23 the Trump orbit -- and he liked her. He just thought she was, like, a very fierce defender
24 of his. So he started bringing her around and calling her to the Oval and stuff.

25 And there were a number of other characters like that, too, that he'd see on TV

1 and then they were suddenly in his good graces and he'd tried to find roles for.

2 Q When you interacted with Ms. Ellis, did it seem like she was exercising more
3 of a communications function or a campaign surrogate for television?

4 A Campaign surrogate for television, yeah. I didn't get the sense that she was
5 particularly up to speed on what we were working on in the White House or even what
6 the campaign was. She was just sort of floating around the broader Trump orbit.

7 Q How about Boris Epshteyn, did you ever interact with him, from the
8 campaign?

9 A I actually only met him once. So, no, I didn't interact with him.

10 Q Okay. And this is a little different topic.

11 So how did you communicate with President Trump outside of in-person
12 meetings? If he wanted to talk to you or you wanted to get a hold of him and he was
13 somewhere else, how would that happen?

14 A So the only way I ever did was through White House Signal, which is -- it's
15 basically -- it's different than the White House operator line, but it's the same function.
16 It's -- I did that, it was a holdover from my Pence days. That's how I always reached
17 Pence.

18 But it's a number you call. They'll say White House Signal. And you say, this is
19 so-and-so, I'd like to be connected to the President. And then they'd call him, see if he
20 wants to take the call, and then connect you through.

21 So that was the only way I ever reached him and -- yeah. And I didn't the
22 main -- I used Signal, not the White House operator, but they're very similar.

23 Q So it would be like an -- this isn't like Outer Oval, this is someone else whose
24 job was to pick up and connect lines. Okay.

25 A Correct. And for what it's worth, Trump, I don't think, used White House

1 Signal that much. I very rarely was able to get ahold of him.

2 With Pence that was always the best way to reach him. I suspect that I would've
3 had more luck had I gone just through Molly Michaels or something. But I didn't, to be
4 honest, I didn't talk to him on the phone very much.

5 Q Do you know whether people would sometimes contact Molly Michael or
6 anyone else in Outer Oval to get ahold of him, if that would be like an effective way?

7 A Yeah. That was very common. He would very regularly -- Molly would
8 holler into him, "I've got so-and-so on the line," and he would take the call then at his
9 desk. So I think a lot of people knew to go directly to her to get him.

10 Q What about other White House aides or advisers like Mr. Scavino or Mr.
11 Meadows, contact them to get ahold of the President?

12 A Probably. So, yeah, Dan was constantly with the President. I still think
13 they'd probably go through Molly. But I'm sure there were outside folks who reached
14 out to Meadows and said, "Can I get an audience?" But he would even, I would guess,
15 would still say yes and then put them through to Molly.

16 Q So we understand the White House issued to President Trump an official
17 White House cell phone. Did you ever talk to President Trump on his cell phone?

18 A I don't believe so. But it's possible that would have been what Signal had
19 connected me to. I don't know, though. But I didn't have the number for it. I never
20 did.

21 Q What about text messages? Did you ever text with him?

22 A No, never texted with him.

23 Q Did you ever communicate through encrypted apps with him, like a
24 WhatsApp or a Signal app?

25 A No.

1 Q Okay. And did you ever hear of people contacting or President Trump not
2 using official White House means to avoid getting calls officially recorded? Did you ever
3 hear that during your time?

4 A So I didn't about -- to be honest, I didn't about him. It wouldn't surprise
5 me. I do know senior staff around him did use WhatsApp and Confide and some of
6 Signal and those things. I never did. It had been hammered in me from my time with
7 Pence that that would be skirting Federal records-keeping laws, but I know that some
8 folks did use those apps.

9 Q Okay. Did you say Confide? Was that one?

10 A Yeah. That one is -- it's similar to Signal, but the message literally deletes
11 as you read it.

12 Q And that was an app you understood some people used?

13 A Yeah. I know I received one message on it because I had created an
14 account years ago when it first came out, but I never used it. But I know some staff did.

15 Q Do you recall ever receiving training from White House counsel or ethics
16 office about what the appropriate use of messaging or phone, how that should be used
17 during your time in the White House?

18 A So, no. And this is -- like -- so, yes, when I was with Pence. When I was
19 with Pence, I went through -- you know, I carry a TS/SCI security clearance, I went
20 through security clearance. I went through Federal records keeping, I went through
21 ethics. You spend a solid week learning the dos and don'ts and how to archive things,
22 even down to if a reporter texts me on my personal phone but it's official business,
23 screenshot it, email it to your official email.

24 Never got that briefing when I went back to the White House. And granted, I
25 mean, it was -- it was -- I don't know.

1 So I actually remember raising to the chief of staff that I thought it was necessary,
2 because Kayleigh McEnany had never worked in government before and so she was
3 always asking me different questions. I was, like, you should just put her through some
4 of the stuff so she knows. And she's a lawyer, so I think she was actually on the more
5 cautious side.

6 But long story short, no. No formal.

7 And I was also stunned coming from -- I don't think this is germane to the
8 conversation, but whatever -- I was stunned coming from the defense background that
9 there were no briefings on how to deal with classified information and that it was actually
10 very cavalierly discussed in nonclassified settings.

11 Robert O'Brien and I both were on a mission to get that dealt with and I don't
12 know that it ever really was.

13 Q What about -- do you remember -- this is somewhat similar to that
14 topic -- any sort of trainings on record, like, what documents could be thrown away or
15 what needed to be maintained for official archives purposes?

16 A Never in my Trump capacity. I knew all that from Pence world, but never
17 once got a briefing on it.

18 Q Okay. And in terms of documents, if you wanted to get a document to the
19 President, was there any sort of process, like you needed to show it to Mr. Meadows, or
20 could you just walk in and present documents to the President?

21 A So formally it should have been that it went through staff secretary, which
22 was Derek Lyons, then should have gone to the chief of staff for approval, and then in
23 front of the President. But that was broken 50 times a day.

24 And I admit I broke it at times. For me it was usually tweets, and it would be
25 fairly just basic stuff, like Congress should support the USMCA or whatever.

1 But, yes, people very often skirted the official, formal process.

2 Q And for the apps that you mentioned earlier, such as Confide, maybe
3 WhatsApp, who do you remember using apps during your time in the White House?

4 A I know Jared used WhatsApp. I know -- I'm trying to think. I know
5 Meadows used one of them. I can't remember. I'm guessing it was Signal or
6 WhatsApp.

7 The only reason I even knew of Confide was Cassidy Hutchinson, who worked for
8 Meadows, used it. She messaged me on it once, which is why I knew of it. And I know
9 Hope Hicks was on Signal.

10 And I say all this. I don't know what they did it on it. I just know that they had
11 accounts on it and used it to communicate with people.

12 Q And do you know why Confide, in particular, was used? I think you said it
13 disappeared right after you read the message?

14 A Yeah. That was the only reason. I think people thought it was more
15 secure because it's just, like, you couldn't screenshot it or anything.

16 [REDACTED] I didn't know if, [REDACTED] you had any questions.

17 [REDACTED] Yeah, just briefly. And I think we're going to stop and take a
18 break, Ms. Griffin, here shortly and move to another topic.

1

2

BY [REDACTED]

3

Q But just in terms of mechanically how the President would issue tweets.

4

Did he actually have a handset or a computer and type it himself or was he always

5

dictating it or giving a hard copy to Scavino or someone else to actually manually issue?

6

A He was always dictating it. I have never seen him on a computer in my life,

7

nor have I seen him on a cell phone, actually, though, I understand that he sometimes

8

used one in the residence. He would -- Scavino constantly had his laptop and he would

9

dictate the tweets to him.

10

And, yeah, I can think of countless times where down to the punctuation, the

11

capitalization, every aspect of it he would dictate.

12

Q We understand that there were times when he would get a hard copy and

13

with a marker and all caps mark it up --

14

A Yeah.

15

Q -- and that he would sometimes do it that way, kind of old school mark it up.

16

A That's true. Yes. He did that with me a number of times.

17

I would, if I didn't just give things to Dan, I would bring a printed copy to the

18

President and he would mark it up, and then I would give it to Dan and Dan would tweet

19

it out.

20

Q Okay. Did you ever see him tear things like that up when he was finished

21

and throw it away?

22

A Yeah. Yeah. He was a big paper tearer. He would, yeah, he would a lot

23

of times just tear things up and put them in the trash.

24

Q We've gotten a lot of documents from the Archives that appear to be taped

25

back together that were important.

1 Did you ever see people sort of scurry to retrieve the torn pieces of paper because
2 they were potentially Presidential records, anything like that?

3 A No. That's -- I would be -- I'd be curious to even -- no, I never saw that. I
4 saw him tear things. But I, in my experience, staff secretary, who I believe is tasked with
5 the archiving, they weren't even particularly good at it. So I'm surprised even to hear
6 somebody had the sense to go back and get those things.

7 [REDACTED] Got it. Okay. I appreciate that.

8 Mr. Aguilar, do you have any questions.

9 Mr. Cooper. [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED] Yeah, Chuck,

11 Mr. Cooper. We've been at this about an hour and three quarters, and I just
12 want to ask your witness if she needs to take a break to catch her breath or whatever.

13 [REDACTED] Well, I do. So we're going to take about 5, 10 minutes.

14 Ms. Griffin. Yeah. Unless the Congressman has something he wants to ask real
15 quick, otherwise if we could take 5 that would be great.

16 Mr. Aguilar. I don't. I'm fine. Thank you.

17 [REDACTED] All right. Thanks, Mr. Aguilar.

18 Ms. Griffin, let's go off the record for about 5 minutes or so.

19 Mr. Cooper, does that work for you?

20 Mr. Cooper. That's perfect. Thank you.

21 [REDACTED] Okay. We'll be back on in 5 minutes. Thank you.

22 Ms. Griffin. Great. Thank you.

23 [Recess.]

24 [REDACTED] All right. I understand, [REDACTED] in the conference room, did you have
25 a couple things you wanted to follow up on? Go ahead.

1 [REDACTED] I do. Yeah.

2 [REDACTED]

3 Q Thank you for being here. Nice to meet you, Ms. Griffin.

4 Quick follow-up. Who else, other than Mr. Scavino and Mr. Trump, had access to
5 post from the @RealDonaldTrump Twitter account?

6 A My understanding is only the two of them.

7 Q You mentioned calling White House Signal if you needed to get a hold of the
8 President, I believe. We've heard of something called the Signal Corps run through, I
9 believe, the NSC. Is that the same thing?

10 A I think it is. And I'm going to do this real quick. I assume it's still the same
11 number. But it literally is -- the number that I had for it and that I used when I was in
12 the White House was [REDACTED]. I believe that is what you're referring to, because I
13 think it was -- it would go to the Situation Room and then connect you.

14 Q Got it. Very helpful. Thank you for that.

15 And then you mentioned briefly the "stand back and stand by" remark that the
16 President made at one of the debates. Do you recall any conversations in the White
17 House or with campaign folks about the Proud Boys, other than what you already
18 mentioned?

19 A So, no. And, admittedly, which I would like to just add for the record,
20 because I did a FOX News hit the next morning and was asked about that, and I
21 remember the moment thinking it was a very bizarre, like, turn of phrase. But I'd never
22 heard of the Proud Boys and I didn't know what it was and I said something like this
23 seems like much ado about nothing.

24 In retrospect, obviously, it meant those remarks because it makes much more
25 sense in the fuller picture. But I had never heard of them. And what was odd to me is,

1 I got regular security briefings and we'd heard of there's a group like the Boogaloo Boys.
2 We'd heard of these others. We'd gotten plenty of information on antifa. But I'd
3 never heard of the Oath Keepers, the Proud Boys, or any of those until that moment and I
4 never really thought about them again until January 6th.

5 Q Okay. Thank you. And who were doing those briefings that you
6 mentioned about, like, the Boogaloo Boys or antifa?

7 A We'd get -- we'd get like -- I'd get NSC briefings when I requested them
8 because it just -- at the Department of Defense I got a daily kind of stripped down version
9 of the PDB. I didn't get any, that wasn't standard to when I was at the White House, but
10 I would request them from the NSC from time to time, just to be aware of what the IC
11 was tracking that could potentially spill over into open space and be something I would
12 have to deal with.

13 [REDACTED] Got it.

14 Thank you, [REDACTED]

15 Thank you, Ms. Griffin.

16 [REDACTED] Okay. All right. [REDACTED], thanks.

17 BY [REDACTED]

18 Q Ms. Griffin, I want to turn now to the election and your involvement, if at all,
19 with pre-election messaging about election fraud.

20 As you, I'm sure, are aware, there were a number of things that the President said
21 or tweeted prior to the election calling the integrity of the election into question. I'll
22 just read you a few of his tweets.

23 June 22nd, 2020: "Rigged 2020 election. Millions of mail-in ballots will be
24 printed by foreign countries and others. It will be the scandal of our times."

25 July 30th: "With universal mail-in voting, not absentee voting, which is good,

1 2020 will be the most inaccurate and fraudulent election in history. It will be a great
2 embarrassment to the USA. Delay the election until people can properly, securely, and
3 safely vote."

4 Tell me if you were at all involved in sort of strategic discussions about pros and
5 cons of this sort of pre-election messaging, calling the integrity of the election into
6 question before election day as people were voting or before.

7 A So, no, I was not involved in them at all. Unfortunately, as was often the
8 case, I would learn these things on Twitter when they came out.

9 But I suspect -- and some of it, to some degree, based in fact, I don't know those
10 particular tweets -- I think that the President must have been getting -- I know that we
11 had polling a little later on that showed him losing and in it showed the specific States
12 and it lined up very closely with where the election came down. So I suspect that he
13 knew he was trailing and was creating kind of a narrative in advance.

14 But, no, I was never part of any of those discussions, with the one exception of the
15 one I mentioned earlier and I was, like, there in a bystander capacity when, I believe Jason
16 Miller, he said it to me, but then separately conveyed directly to the President, like,
17 you've got to cool it on scaring people out of mail-in voting because that's going to -- we
18 need absentee voters, military ballots, elderly, et cetera.

19 But that's honestly the only conversations that I recall about it.

20 Q Okay. Yeah. And from your testimony before, it seems clear that this is
21 not a well-oiled messaging machine where the campaign and the White House are
22 aligned and there's a lot of thought before these things are issued.

23 Tell me more about your awareness about what the polling data was showing and
24 the very real fear that the election would be lost. How did that manifest in your
25 experience in terms of messaging?

1 A So the first time it really I feel like hit people was that Tulsa rally that I
2 mentioned. He did not pack the stadium. There were many, many empty seats
3 toward the top. And there had been this pre-overflow event that was going to be
4 outside. And I remember being on the plane, we were heading into Tulsa, and the
5 advance team was panicking because they were hearing from the campaign that there
6 was basically no one at the overflow site.

7 So they made the decision to say that he was canceling his attendance when in
8 reality there was no event to even go to.

9 On top of that, Brad Parscale, who was at the time campaign manager, I had been
10 on -- I'd been sitting with Trump when he called Brad from the Oval and Brad told him
11 there have been like a million tickets requested for this.

12 It later turns out it was like hacked by, like, I don't know, some, like, young people
13 and it was, like, a prank or whatever. So Trump went in thinking this thing's going to be
14 packed to the brim, we need an overflow, and he couldn't pack the room.

15 So it was, I think, the first time that the team was like, "Oh, wow, we could lose,"
16 but I think that it also hit him. And it was shortly thereafter that this line of messaging
17 came up.

18 I just think it comes from a place of his character where he's just incapable of, like,
19 he can't just lose gracefully, so he started to create this in his mind. But it would have
20 been later -- later probably, I want to say late June or early July that we started getting
21 polling that reflected the direction things were going.

22 And the first debate was very bad for the former President. And then I
23 remember being at the second debate and David Bossie, one of his outside advisers, said
24 to me -- I asked him, I was like, "What's your read on this?" He said, "If it's tomorrow,
25 he's definitely losing."

1 That said, I don't know, I did not -- I don't know that people were that honest with
2 him about him trailing, but I know I saw polls that showed him trailing.

3 Q Yeah. You're anticipating my next question. How much of this, if you
4 know, was conveyed to him? Was it chatter among you and others whose professional
5 future was at stake speculating or evaluating this or was this being told to the President
6 directly?

7 A I don't know, but I don't -- I'm not sure that it was being told to him. I
8 definitely know -- I witnessed Meadows always doing a really positive rosy version of
9 things.

10 I had heard from people that Stepien was fairly honest with him, but I never
11 actually witnessed that. So I'm not sure what he was being told.

12 Q Okay. Did you ever hear discussion, Ms. Griffin, in advance of the election
13 about what we'll say, what messaging should come forth in the event of a loss? In other
14 words, what the strategy -- was this laying a foundation for a later strategy or was it
15 conversely just sort of his gut inability to accept that he was losing and spouting off?

16 A I never heard that. I mean, and candidly, as we've discussed before, there
17 was not a lot of preplanning.

18 But I witnessed quite a bit of -- there was never discussion about if he lost that I
19 was present for.

20 Q Okay.

21 A It was almost like we were living in a reality where that was -- there was no
22 scenario that that could happen.

23 So I did not -- I don't know of a concession speech being written, I don't know of
24 any conversations -- like, I was at the White House election night -- about any
25 conversations about if it went a different way.

1 Q Yeah. And in terms of the specifics of those claims -- the election will be
2 rigged, will be corrupt -- do you believe that that was genuine, that the President believed
3 that, or did you, when you saw that, think that it was, again, a rationalization or laying a
4 foundation or an excuse for a potential loss?

5 A I go back and forth on this because -- and I believe I shared this with you
6 before. I remember maybe a week after the election was called, I was barely even going
7 into the West Wing. Most people were basically doing their morning duties and taking
8 off.

9 But I popped into the Oval just to, like, give the President the headlines and see
10 how he was doing. And he was looking at the TV and he said, "Can you believe I loss to
11 this effing guy?" And then just kind of moved forward. But in that moment I think he
12 knew he lost, but I believe now I think he thinks it was stolen from him.

13 Q Yeah.

14 A I think there's a level of delusion, of confirmation bias, of surrounding
15 himself by only information that matches what he wants to hear and believe. And I
16 really do think he believes it was stolen. I think many people around him do as well.

17 Q Yeah. You did tell me the story about that moment with him in the dining
18 room before. Was it just the two of you, you and him, when he was sitting watching TV?

19 A I believe Scavino was there and I want to say Nick Luna was, but I'm not
20 positive.

21 Q Okay. And you came in to share something with him, this is when you were
22 still in the job, and Biden was on television. Is that right?

23 A Yeah.

24 Q His image was on the screen?

25 A Yeah, his image was on the screen. And, yeah, and I can't even remember,

1 I think I just -- I basically felt -- I don't think -- I hadn't seen him since election day and I
2 just felt like I needed to go check for a sign of life. And I popped in with something
3 random to give him an update on and that's when he said it.

4 Q I see. So this is the first time you had seen him since the election?

5 A Yeah. He -- and I think this was reported at the time -- he basically stayed
6 in the residence for like 3 days and didn't come down to the Oval. And keep in mind the
7 election wasn't even called till the 7th. And then several more days went by that he
8 didn't come down. And then he finally did. So this was probably mid-November at this
9 point.

10 Q Yeah.

11 A Yeah.

12 Q And his exact words, to the extent you can recall, Ms. Griffin, were what?

13 A "I can't believe I lost to this effing guy." He did not say effing.

14 Q Yeah. To the screen, to President-elect Biden on the screen?

15 A Yes. Yes.

16 Q Got it.

17 A And I believe a day later, or it may have been the same day, he -- oh, it
18 wasn't a day or two later. He did a press conference, like a coronavirus press
19 conference, and he let it slip in that press conference, he acknowledged, like -- I can't
20 remember how he said it -- but acknowledged that the President won.

21 Q Okay. And do you remember discussion around that time of him possibly
22 conceding or more affirmatively acknowledging his defeat? Did that ever come up? I
23 mean, if he said it privately, was there a discussion about him saying it publicly?

24 A No. But keep in mind, just to kind of paint a picture of what this period was
25 like, it was very bizarre. And, I mean, it's a unique moment in history where an

1 incumbent loses. And this whole kind of 90-day period was strange. I was only there
2 for part of it.

3 But people just weren't coming in. The West Wing was a ghost town. And I
4 admit, and I'm not proud of it, but I was really going in for probably like 4 hours a day. I
5 would do my morning COVID meetings, make sure I touched base with the Cabinet
6 communicators, and then would leave.

7 I mean, you wouldn't see people, like, people were just not even coming into work
8 at that point. Meadows I think I saw maybe once in that whole period.

9 But then it also was there -- this is when some of the characters started showing
10 up, Sidney Powell, Mike Flynn, Mike Lindell, and those folks were brought into meetings
11 during that period.

12 But, like, the average person, I don't think like Larry Kudlow was coming into work
13 at that point. It was just like an unstaffed West Wing.

14 And Jared was out of the country for a lot of it. So it was just a very odd time.

15 Q And that started upon the declaration of the networks that Biden had won?

16 A Yes. And, actually, just a notable moment -- yeah. So Biden had won. I
17 was -- it was the first COVID, like, morning meeting that Jared led after that had been
18 announced. And Dr. Birx raised, she said, "Well, should we be looping the Biden
19 transition into these conversations?" And Jared just said, "Absolutely not." And then
20 we just moved on. Which like that would have been the most logical thing to do, but --

21 Q Yeah. Yeah. No, I want to go back to the transition and other things.
22 But let me go back to election day or election night.

23 Were you in the White House the evening watching returns?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Tell us what was going on in the White House and where you spent your

1 time.

2 A Yeah. So I was at the White House that night. The West Wing, like, each
3 of the different components kind of had like their own little events. It was sort of a
4 party atmosphere. Like, the NSC had, like, pizza in the Roosevelt Room, and comms, we
5 had, like, snacks for upper press, and the chief was hosting people in his office.

6 But then, like, the official senior staff party was in the East Wing. A lot of
7 outside, like, conservative media types were coming and, like, the whole host of
8 characters from the campaign.

9 I stayed in the West Wing until fairly late and then eventually walked over to the
10 East Wing with a few of my staffers. I think Kayleigh was with me, though we weren't
11 even on speaking terms at this time. But we -- she and I went together, and Sarah
12 Matthews, who worked under me and was a good friend of mine. And, I mean, it was a
13 party atmosphere.

14 And at this point Arizona hadn't been called. I was getting texts, like, one from a
15 very prominent political reporter who knows his stuff that said, like, "Holy shit, he might
16 do it again," like meaning Trump might pull it off again. So there was a sense that he
17 might win.

18 So very much a party atmosphere. Everyone's drinking. I was talking to Alex
19 Azar and his wife in a corner.

20 But I noticed Ronna McDaniel was floating around. She seemed very stressed.
21 I always had a good relationship with Ronna. Actually I give her credit. She was
22 someone who tended to push back on Trump. That has since dissipated.

23 But I walked over, said, "Hey, Ronna, good to see you. Things are looking good."
24 And she just -- I can't remember her exact words, but it was, like, things are not looking
25 good, and then took a phone call and walked away.

1 Then the Arizona call came and the mood of the room just completely changed.

2 Q Did you ever make it in, Ms. Griffin, to the Map Room, where I understand
3 there were a lot of people with computers looking at the numbers?

4 A So I did that after the Arizona call. So, yeah, the President had not made an
5 appearance at the actual party. He was -- he'd been in the residence and then in the
6 Map Room. I popped my head into the Map Room after the Arizona call and it was just
7 like chaos. He was just yelling at people.

8 I believe Jason Miller was to his right. Bill was there on his computer, Jared was
9 there, the kids were all there. And I honestly just literally, like, peeked in and then left.

10 Q I'm sorry. Did you say the President was there yelling at people?

11 A Yes, the President was there. Hope Hicks was there. Yeah, Eric and Don
12 Jr. were there. I believe Kimberly Guilfoyle was there.

13 Q Are you familiar with any of the efforts to reach out to the Murdochs or
14 anyone at FOX once they made the Arizona call?

15 A No. I heard the reporting on it, but I was not touching that with a 10-foot
16 pole.

17 So I actually left after that. It was about 10:30. And keep in mind, like, it was
18 not like a super safe time to be leaving the White House grounds. I'd actually, like,
19 requested a car from the chief of staff because we were all -- all of us were getting threats
20 and whatnot. And he didn't get me one. So I walked about half a mile off the White
21 House grounds, eventually got an Uber, and I went home.

22 And I'm going to be honest with you, I didn't even stay up to see if it was called. I
23 was done with the whole thing.

24 The next morning, though --

25 Q Before we leave election night, do you remember before you left there being

1 any discussion about what the President would say, right? There's expectation that the
2 incumbent President is going to make some sort of speech. Were you involved at all in
3 discussions about what he should say?

4 A No. And part of the reason I wasn't is, like, this -- the final stretch I was
5 definitely and a lot of people were kind of boxed out in favor of more of the core
6 campaign team, and I was among the people that was boxed out. Probably a blessing in
7 disguise. But, like, I know Rudy Giuliani was really in his ear.

8 Even going back ahead of the debates, I tried to get into debate prep. I made the
9 case there was not a single woman present in debate prep, and I was like, that's a massive
10 oversight, that's 50 percent of the population, and was not permitted by the chief of staff
11 to join.

12 But it was kind of the same core team there, the kids, Rudy, Hope to some degree,
13 and then Meadows. And I think those were kind of the people advising him that night
14 about what to do.

1

2 [12:11 p.m.]

3

BY [REDACTED]

4

Q I see. And so the family -- Rudy and Meadows were in, or were advising him, and then you and others, sort of the White House communications professionals, were sort of on the outs. Is that --

7

A Yeah, on the outs.

8

Q -- accurate?

9

A Yeah. At some point, Kayleigh got back into the fold, but I was never quite sure how that happened. She just started appearing on TV in a campaign capacity.

11

Q Yeah. Okay. And that night, Mr. Biden went out and said, hey, it's too early to tell. We're confident that things look good, but there's a long way to go. We can't make any prediction at this point.

14

The President, conversely, declared victory, basically said, This is a fraud on the American public. This is an embarrassment to our country. We were getting ready to win this election. Frankly, we did win this election. We did win this election. This is a major fraud in our Nation.

18

Do you have any idea who advised him for -- toward or against declaring victory prematurely before the votes had been counted?

20

A No. Only what's publicly been reported, that Rudy Giuliani was suggesting that.

22

Q Okay.

23

A I imagine others as well.

24

Q That happened, sounds like, after you left?

25

A Yeah.

1 Q Okay. So you get back to work the next day. What is the plan in terms of
2 messaging during those days before -- between Tuesday night and Saturday, when the
3 election is called?

4 A So there's an exhibit related to this that -- that we sent over this morning,
5 but I was scheduled to go on Harris Faulkner's show on FOX News, and I had planned to
6 basically say it's too soon to tell, you know, but the Republicans have a lot to be proud of.
7 They elected a record number of women to the House of Representatives, record number
8 of African-American turnout and Hispanic voter turnout for Republicans, and basically
9 leave it at that.

10 And I got a call from Hope Hicks saying, Stand down. We have a whole comms
11 plan in place. We have a whole strategy. Don't you -- don't say anything about the
12 election. Don't -- you know, just stand down.

13 And then she sent me a text, which I have the text message.

14 Q Yeah. No. We're going to cull -- let's cull that up, and maybe that will
15 help you --

16 A Yeah.

17 Q -- tell the story.

18 Grant, I believe we marked that as exhibit 18 -- 17 or 18, whatever next in line at
19 the end.

20 So, Ms. Griffin, we'll cull it out so you can see it, and it's --

21 A Yeah.

22 Q For the record, this is one of the texts you helpfully provided to the select
23 committee yesterday or today.

24 A Yeah.

25 Q Is this the text you're talking about?

1 A Yeah. And so what predated the -- and the texts at the top were from
2 weeks prior, but --

3 Q Okay.

4 A -- it's that second one on November 4th -- or that last one from
5 November 4th.

6 So, basically, she had called me and -- because she had seen that I was booked -- I
7 guess somebody at the campaign flagged that I was going on TV -- and said, Stand down.
8 She was -- specified that she was in Rosslyn, meaning campaign headquarters, and said,
9 We have a whole comms plan and strategy in place, and we have folks that are going out,
10 so don't do anything.

11 And that was that. And then she sent this text message, because I think she
12 realized she was like kind of abrupt with me, which was fine. But that was it. That was
13 the last I'd heard. So I have no idea what -- what she meant by the had a whole comms
14 plan or strategy in place.

15 Q Well, tell me first about the appearance. What did you say --

16 A Oh, I didn't end up doing --

17 Q Oh, I see.

18 A I canceled it, and just went to the White House and did work that morning,
19 and then I think left late afternoon.

20 Q Okay. And then did you subsequently have -- come to learn from
21 Ms. Hope -- Ms. Hicks or others what the whole communications plan was with respect to
22 talking about the election?

23 A No. I just saw it unfold on TV, which was -- yeah. I remember -- I
24 think -- it was November 7th, I believe, when the election was actually called. So I
25 basically was told nothing in this period, and I just went about, like, my official duties to

1 the best of my ability.

2 But I was sitting home. I believe it was a Saturday when it was called for
3 President Biden. And no -- like, I -- you know, no one reached out to me. I think I
4 maybe pinged Mark Meadows and didn't hear back from him.

5 But very quickly is when you started seeing what I call kind of the first wave of the
6 big lie, which was, you know, Rick Grenell being deployed one place, Matt Schlapp
7 somewhere else, and there was this semicoordinated effort that was like reasonably
8 sophisticated where they were -- the RNC was actually challenging results. But then
9 obviously, one by one, those court cases fell down and a lot of those surrogates just
10 disappeared. Like, Pam Bondi was out there early on and then she was gone.

11 And then it went to the second phase, which I think was, you know, even more
12 bizarre, where it was really like Rudy, Jenna Ellis, and Kayleigh McEnany, and
13 Sidney Powell out there.

14 Q Yeah.

15 A And there was --

16 Q Okay.

17 A You know, the RNC press conference. But I wasn't read into any of the
18 thinking, what they were talking about. None of it added up to me.

19 Q Okay. So, again, here is an example of disconnected comms. This is the
20 campaign folks -- even though the campaign's over, it's those people --

21 A Yeah.

22 Q -- executing some sort of messaging plan in which you're not involved. You
23 and the folks in the White House, you're --

24 A Yeah.

25 Q Did you not do any press? Did you not talk about the election afterwards?

1 A No. I never -- I don't think I ever did press again in my White House
2 capacity.

3 Q Yeah. Yeah. You've given some --

4 A Meaning TV.

5 Q -- interviews about this since where you said -- and I'm going to quote from
6 an interview that you did in -- for -- at CNN. "I was ready to go out after the -- after
7 election day and say, Look, there were incredible things we should be proud of, but I was
8 asked to stand down. And the message instead was the election was stolen. It won
9 the day, and it was wrong."

10 Do you remember saying that? Does that sort of accurately summarize --

11 A Yeah.

12 Q -- your view about the post-election messaging?

13 A Yeah, very much so. The stand down was meaning Hope calling on behalf
14 of the campaign telling me to stand down, and then very rapidly seeing this -- this lie and
15 this myth take over as the messaging strategy.

16 Q Yeah. We know -- we've heard from a lot of people about the President's
17 resistance to talking about accomplishments, right? In other words, people were
18 encouraging him, hey, talk about all the great things that happened over the last 4 years,
19 not the election.

20 Did you ever have a discussion with him about that?

21 A No. I should have. I had it with Jared Kushner and I had it with
22 Mark Meadows. I -- the last text, I think, I ever sent to Jared Kushner was the morning
23 that the Pfizer vaccine made it through emergency use authorization, because I had
24 woken up at like 7:00 in the morning to a text from Dr. Fauci saying, you know, this is the
25 greatest news. This is -- you know, he literally said, he's like, it's better than I possibly

1 could have imagined.

2 So I texted Jared. I said, This is his legacy. He needs to spend the next 90 days
3 trying to get as many shots in arms as possible, and this is what he'll be remembered by.
4 Went unresponded to.

5 I raised the same in person to Meadows. And he said, No, we're not going to be
6 doing that.

7 I do -- I give a little bit of credit -- I think Hope wanted to do kind of like a victory
8 tour and, like, go, you know, to States and do like a highlight reel of biggest
9 accomplishments, but that didn't win out either.

10 Q Okay. And then you've described people sort of pushing in either direction.
11 Do you have a sense on this point, talk about your accomplishments or continue to talk
12 about the election, who was pushing him in either direction?

13 A Yeah. I think -- I do think Hope was pushing him to talk about
14 accomplishments. I certainly was. Jared kind of went MIA. I know he went to the
15 Middle East for a bit, and so I don't even really know what he was advising in those days.

16 Q Yeah.

17 A But the majority of the voices -- this is where it gets a little bit odd, is like -- I
18 shared this with you before, but to put it on the record, is Meadows privately shared with
19 me -- and I know he did this with a number of Members of Congress -- where he said,
20 I'm -- don't worry, Alyssa. I'm going to bring the President around. He's going to
21 accept the results, kind of talking about it like it was like a stage -- you know, stages of
22 grief and he was eventually going to come around.

23 And he was saying that to me. He said it to Ben Williamson. But then I literally
24 saw Sidney Powell, Mike Flynn, and one other character in the West Wing lobby, which
25 was right by my office, and I went to go to the chief's office to say, You should not let

1 them go in with the President. They're going to get crazy ideas in his head. And I see
2 that Meadows is walking them into the -- into the Oval Office.

3 So he -- this is where -- I haven't spoken to Mark Meadows since January 6th. I
4 don't intend to again. He spoke out of both sides of his mouth.

5 The Reporter. I lost you, if you can hear me.

6 Ms. Griffin. Oh, can you hear me?

7 [REDACTED] Yeah. Is that the reporter?

8 Ms. Griffin. Yeah.

9 [REDACTED] Martin, are you back on? Can you hear us?

10 Ms. Griffin. We'll give him a minute.

11 [REDACTED] We obviously need the reporter.

12 If any of you guys, the reporters, are on, can you confirm that we can keep going?

13 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] we still have you.

14 [REDACTED] Okay.

15 Ms. Griffin. Yeah.

16 [REDACTED] I just want to make sure we've got a court reporter. I see Debra
17 and Martin are on my list. Can either of you hear me or just confirm that we're okay to
18 proceed?

19 All right. [REDACTED] I don't know if you can send a note to --

20 Mr. Schiff. It would be on the reporter's end, because you're coming in crystal
21 clear for the rest of us.

22 [REDACTED] Okay. Thanks, Mr. Schiff.

23 Yeah. And I see them on. Again, I'm hesitant to keep going if we don't have
24 confirmation.

25 The Reporter. [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED] Yes?

2 The Reporter. I just now got back. I don't know if anyone heard me when I said
3 I lost you, but --

4 [REDACTED] We did, Martin. I appreciate that. What's the last thing you got
5 before I stopped?

6 The Reporter. She was saying: They're going to get crazy ideas in his head.
7 And I see that Meadows is walking them into the Oval Office. So he -- this is where -- I
8 haven't spoken to Mark, and that's where it cut out on me.

9 [REDACTED] Got it. Okay.

10 Ms. Griffin. I can pick up from there.

11 [REDACTED] Thank you.

12 Ms. Griffin. Yeah. So the -- there were a number of times in those -- those few
13 days -- and, honestly, I can count on two hands the number of times I even went into the
14 West Wing after the election was called, because there was -- Thanksgiving fell in that
15 period. I had never used a vacation day, and I took like a full -- I think like 10 days off.

16 But Meadows was active -- I became aware he was actively facilitating some of the
17 more conspiratorial discussions and getting that information in front of the President.
18 And I remember -- and I apologize if my memory's a little foggy, but they at one point
19 had, like, I think it was the Michigan State reps come in, and they were going to try to like
20 sway them one way or another, and it didn't go as planned.

21 But there was -- it was just a lot of activity like that. And I remember saying to
22 Meadows, I said, Well, you know, what's the plan?

23 Like -- and he told me -- he said, I think Trump is going to go to Mar-a-Lago for
24 Thanksgiving, and he may just not come back. And so that kind of gave me hope. I'm
25 like, oh, okay, so we're going to have a peaceful transition of power, and this is

1 happening. But then -- but then, after that, brought in some of these folks who were
2 continuing to challenge the election.

3 And so one -- one notable meeting -- this was a few days before I resigned, which
4 I've shared before. I went into the chief of staff's office. Ben Williamson was there as
5 well. And I said, Mark, I would like to step down. I don't like the direction this is going.
6 I don't want to damage my credibility by being linked into this, and I'm just ready to move
7 on to the next phase of my life.

8 And he said, Can you please give me another week or another 2 weeks?

9 And I said, I can't.

10 And he said, At least give me 48 hours so I can let the President know.

11 And I said, Sure.

12 And he said, Well, what if I told you that we're not going to be leaving and we're
13 going to have another term and this is going to go the other direction?

14 And I said, Sir, I'm -- I'm resigning.

15 And that -- that was it. And I ended up resigning I think 24 hours later.

16 So I -- what scares me is I think -- I think Meadows kind of believed some of it.

17 And after the fact, I learned a lot of the -- this kind of scary things that they were doing
18 with like staff in DOD. They fired my old boss, Mark Esper.

19 I will share one thing that I cannot confirm myself, but it's worth looking into. I
20 have been told that they tried to fire Gina Haspel, the CIA director, and install Kash Patel.
21 But Gina, who's a very savvy operator and an incredible public servant, already had what I
22 call a suicide pact in place, where basically the entire IC would walk with her if that
23 happened, officially, like -- or essentially, like, decapitating the entire intelligence
24 community. So they were able to stop it. But, allegedly, for about 14 minutes, Kash
25 was actually the CIA director.

1 And don't need to tell this to Congressman Schiff, but that man has no business
2 being anywhere near intelligence or anything else.

3 So all that to say it was a scary period, and I'm glad I wasn't there for a lot of it, but
4 I think you guys have a lot of threads you should pull.

5

BY [REDACTED]

6 Q Yeah. No. Ms. Griffin, again, to CNN you recently said that it was a very
7 scary time in the White House. You mentioned the level of desperation among those
8 closest to the President, and that he was trying to hang on to power in any way possible.

9 It sounds like you're referring to things like challenges to the election, installation
10 of unqualified loyalists into key positions. Is generally your sense of that
11 that -- manifestations of that desperation?

12 A Yes. And I want to be careful. A lot of this is speculative or based on my
13 best observation, or based on things that I later learned about in the press or from people
14 who were there, not firsthand knowledge. But, I mean, obviously we saw the emails
15 that Meadows sent to the Department of Justice. We, you know, knew some of the
16 maneuverings he was doing at DOD, and I was still very close with a lot of folks at DOD at
17 that time.

18 But I will say this to -- I think it's important to understand. Meadows was
19 somebody I had a tremendous amount of respect for when I was -- when I worked for him
20 in Congress, but, like, I had the benefit of I went from working in Congress -- well -- and,
21 you know, for kind of small-ball, back-bench Members, to the VP, which that kind of
22 taught me, like, these are the big leagues. These -- this is like -- the international
23 community is watching. Your words matter. Your actions matter. Then going on to
24 DOD, where and the stakes are even higher, and then back to the White House.

25 If there's one observation I have of Mark Meadows it's that he never appreciated

1 the significance of the role he had, but he loved the levers of power that came with it.

2 I mean, the number of times I would hear him like, literally, like, threatening
3 Dr. Fauci and like calling him and like, I will fire you, you know, threatening people at the
4 FDA, and really just kind of throwing his weight around. He became a different man in
5 that role, that I think perhaps somebody who maybe had some step in between could
6 have learned, like, how to move into that kind of role in public service.

7 Q Yeah.

8 A So, like, I say all that because it doesn't surprise me that he was like, Well, I
9 control the DOJ. Well, I control this.

10 And, yeah, it's -- it -- very -- he shouldn't have been in that role.

11 Q Yeah. Very interesting. And it sounds like there weren't a lot of people,
12 or the list of people that actually were giving the President, in your view, sound advice,
13 helping him understand appropriately what he or departments could do, that that list
14 diminished over the last weeks or months of the administration.

15 A That's my understanding, yes. And I should add, although you may get to
16 this in your questioning, it -- Meadows was -- also worked to marginalize the Vice
17 President and the Vice President's team. And if there were ever -- I should have
18 mentioned him earlier, but if there were any figure in the administration who tried to give
19 the President sane counsel, it was Mike Pence, and he did actually have a decent ability to
20 influence him. And he cracked down on their access to him. He cracked down on
21 Marc Short's access to the President, and I think that was --

22 Q Tell me more about that. How so? How did Meadows work to
23 marginalize the Vice President or diminish his access to the President?

24 A It was actually longstanding. It was preelection denialism. It was largely
25 related to COVID for whatever reason. He wanted -- he thought that the Vice

1 President's team was taking -- was getting too much of the credit for it. He boxed them
2 out of a lot of conversations. And even at one point, I -- I heard this secondhand, but,
3 like, canceled the standing weekly lunches that the Vice President and the President had.

4 And then in the final stretch -- I mean, after I resigned, I think Marc Short was the
5 only person I was actively talking to in the days leading up to January 6th. And he didn't
6 show his hand. He didn't tell me anything. Like, I knew what the Vice President would
7 do, but it was more just like, hey, I'm thinking about you. How are you guys doing?

8 And he just expressed to me frustration that, like -- he, like, I thought
9 Mark Meadows was going to be my best friend in this West Wing, and he's my biggest
10 enemy. Like, we can't even get an audience with the President when we need it, kind of
11 thing.

12 So I -- yeah. I think he just worked to marginalize them. I don't know why
13 either.

14 Q I see. Okay. Well, I want to go back before we get too far from the
15 election itself, right? Do you -- you mentioned before that the polling numbers prior to
16 the election were pretty consistent with the election results themselves. Do you
17 remember any post-election kind of assessment of the numbers or sort of a campaign
18 analysis of -- anatomy of the law? So being a party to any of those discussions?

19 A No. I wasn't, and I'm not aware of any of those taking place.

20 Q All right. We have obtained a document, for example, that the campaign
21 prepared that Stepien and Jason Miller and a guy named Oz, who I think was the -- the
22 data guy in the campaign, essentially evaluating the battleground States and looking at
23 margins in particular areas, comparing 2016 to 2020, and concluding that it was, in urban
24 and suburban and outer sort of ex-urban areas, that's where the difference was, that, in
25 2020 --

1 A That's right.

2 Q -- the President underperformed in those areas, whereas -- down from 2016,
3 a very clear-eyed kind of assessment.

4 Do you remember any of that kind of clear-eyed assessment of why the election
5 turned out the way it did, either discussions with you or discussions with the President
6 himself?

7 A No. And that would have been so helpful, because that -- that tracks with
8 what I saw beforehand. But, no, I do -- I don't recall that, know of it being briefed to the
9 President.

10 Q Yeah. You were recorded in Politico, Ms. Griffin, as saying, The results of
11 the election almost perfectly aligned with our internal polling. So this notion that
12 everyone's kind of surprised and it turned out so different than we were expecting. I
13 mean, for what I was read into, we always knew Pennsylvania was going to be a huge
14 uphill battle, as was Arizona. North Carolina would be a squeaker. We'd win Florida.
15 Georgia was the one we just didn't adequately have a read on, or how close that would
16 be. But none of this would come as a surprise to anyone who was following the data.

17 A Yeah.

18 Q Again, I think you've said this, but the results were commensurate with the
19 early -- the preelection polling that you were familiar with.

20 A Yes. That's correct. The only one that was a wild card is we never had
21 ourselves losing Georgia, but the -- yeah. Like, I even remember the chairman of the
22 Pennsylvania GOP saying on the plane, like, you guys are probably going to lose
23 Pennsylvania. But, no, I just don't know that anyone ever said this stuff to the
24 President.

25 Like, I think -- like, I think Bill Stepien's good at what he does. I don't know that

1 he ever delivers those tough messages to Trump.

2 Q Yeah. Let me show you another exhibit that's taken -- it's a text message.
3 It's exhibit 1, and this is one that we shared with you that I believe came from
4 Ben Williamson. And it is a text exchange you had with him the day after the election.
5 It's November the 4th.

6 And moving down --

7 A Yeah. Could you scroll down?

8 Q -- he -- the blue is him, because this is a text message that came from him.
9 Is this Pennsylvania thing hot air or do our people actually think we're winning there?
10 You say, Dude, I don't know. Stepien usually doesn't bullshit.

11 Williamson's response is, Yeah, he doesn't. My fear is that it's not really him
12 making these statements, if you know what I mean.

13 You say, Yeah, had the exact same thought.

14 Do you recall specifically this Pennsylvania issue that you were texting with Ben
15 about?

16 A Oh, so am I the -- I apologize. Am I the -- I'm the gray and not the blue?

17 Q That's right, because the blue is --

18 A I thought I was the blue.

19 Q Yeah. You're the gray.

20 A Yeah. So I think this must have been that we were challenging something
21 in Pennsylvania. That's -- to the best of my knowledge, and that's something that would
22 make sense, is I think that was where -- this may have been where they had already like
23 deployed some lawyers and challenged the results. So I think that's what he was asking.

24 And that is true. I never knew Stepien to -- Stepien, unlike a lot of the Trump
25 people, wasn't a liar, and he was actually, like, fairly good at what he did. So I -- that -- I

1 think that was my point, is, like, I --

2 Q Yeah.

3 A Stepien doesn't usually BS.

4 Q Yeah. Were you involved at all, in terms of messaging or otherwise, aware
5 of sort of the litigation, and we're going to file this in Pennsylvania, or that in Georgia, or
6 was that all being done --

7 A No. It was all -- that was all between the campaign and the RNC. And,
8 honestly, I learned about -- I learned what was happening on TV as it happened.

9 Q I see. Okay.

10 There's another text with Ben Williamson, if you could cull up, Grant, exhibit 2,
11 that's just a few days later.

12 This also comes from him, so he's the blue and you're the gray.

13 A Okay.

14 Q This is now November 9th, which is the Monday after the networks had
15 called the election on that Saturday, the 7th.

16 He texts you, I'm really worried about Kayleigh being the front-facing spox, which I
17 assume means spokesperson --

18 A Yeah, spokesperson.

19 Q -- for this campaign blowout.

20 And you say, Yeah, dude, are you in tomorrow? Let me know? I can't say this
21 clearly enough. We lost. We have so much to be proud of, but we f'ing lost.

22 A Right.

23 Q You say, I'm really worried about this -- about, A, dragging staff into a failed
24 legal challenge, and, B, giving people a false hope.

25 He says he couldn't agree more. I mean, it's fine to fight. I get it. Our

1 supporters want us to. But there's a middle ground and classy way that this could be
2 executed, and what we're doing is not that.

3 Tell me a little bit more. Why don't we just start with your state of mind,
4 Ms. Griffin. On Monday, November 9th, you say, We f'ing lost. It sounds like you were
5 clear that --

6 A Yeah.

7 Q -- given the polling, that this was -- there was no widespread fraud and a
8 stolen election, but that you had lost.

9 A Yeah. Like, I -- I mean, listen, I also didn't mind that we lost. I think
10 that's -- I just want to state that for the record. I had seen so much terrible stuff by this
11 petty man that was our former President that, even though I'm a diehard conservative, I
12 was, frankly, relieved that Biden had won. So that probably gave me a little bit more
13 peace than maybe some of my colleagues.

14 Q Yeah.

15 A But I -- I was very -- I was concerned when I started seeing Kayleigh pop up
16 on TV in like a -- you know, a campaign capacity, because, again, like, I had about 20 to 25
17 people who reported to me. She had another maybe 10 who reported to her. But we
18 kind of acted like -- I treated them as a collective team.

19 And these are young people. Many of them, it was their first career, you know,
20 or second job in D.C., you know, 24 to 25 years old. And I didn't want them to see their
21 boss out there saying this and thinking, like, oh, yeah, we've got a fighting chance, we're
22 going to stick around.

23 Like, they have bills to pay. They also have futures, and, like, I didn't want them
24 tying their name to a failed effort to overturn an election and not be able to get
25 employed again, although apparently in the Republican Party, that's like actually a

1 prerequisite, is to think the election was stolen. But, anyway, I digress.

2 I was very frustrated in -- as reflected in these texts, and I never expressed that
3 directly to Kayleigh. I did -- I basically just confided in Ben about it.

4 But I did, however, which I'd like to include on the record -- it would have been
5 about this time. It might have been a few days later. There was reporting, I want to
6 say, in Politico that Johnny McEntee, who was the head of PPO, Presidential Personnel
7 Office, had put out basically a threat that any staffer at any government agency or at the
8 White House that was like shopping their resume and looking for a new job would be
9 fired immediately. It was meant to put fear into staff who weren't being loyal and
10 staying with the President through, you know, his second term.

11 So I called an all-hands meeting with the entire communications team in the
12 Roosevelt Room and said, Guys, I need you to hear me. We lost the election. I will
13 help every one of you find your next role, but do -- and if anyone threatens you, if
14 anybody come -- you know, if you get any wind of somebody coming after you because
15 you're pushing a resume, like, tell me immediately. Do not be intimidated by this.

16 And sure enough, all of my staff ended up in fantastic roles on Capitol Hill,
17 Governors' offices, et cetera. But that was my biggest concern. It just -- to me, it just
18 was -- it was sending the wrong message internally but then also externally to the
19 American public. I mean, I should have led with that. That's more important. But,
20 like, we were just -- they were just straight up lying to the public.

21 Q Any ramifications from you holding that meeting and giving your
22 communications staff that kind of assessment?

23 A I learned that Julia Hahn, who worked for me, immediately went to Johnny
24 McEntee and told him. And I had like two missed calls from him, and I just ignored it.
25 At that point, like, I knew I was going to leave this -- I was going to resign in -- within a few

1 days. I honestly only was sticking around to, like, tie up loose ends in terms of like
2 COVID work and to just be in touch with my team and help them find jobs.

3 Q I understand. Okay.

4 So you've described McEntee as perpetuating this notion of a second term.
5 You've described Meadows as well as kind of fueling it. And you've expressed some
6 skepticism about Kayleigh McEnany, your being concerned about her being the
7 spokesperson.

8 Tell me more about your sense of Ms. McEnany, where she fell on this sort of
9 either, hey, we lost, let's gracefully exit, versus, let's facilitate the big lie?

10 A I am a Christian woman, so I will say this. Kayleigh is a liar and an
11 opportunist. I wish her the best, but she made -- she's a smart woman. She's a
12 Harvard law grad. This is not an idiot. She knew we lost the election, but she made a
13 calculation that she wanted to have a certain life post-Trump that required staying in his
14 good graces. And that was more important to her than telling the truth to the American
15 public.

16 Q That suggests, Ms. Griffin, that you -- you're suggesting that she knew that
17 what she was saying was inaccurate, that she's not a true believer, she's a liar.

18 A That is my assessment, yes. I never confronted her on it, because I don't
19 think it would have been constructive. But she is -- she's actually a very smart person,
20 and I think she saw that as a moment to kind of, like, if I do this one last public-facing
21 stand for Trump, I'm going to be set. This is going to work out for me.

22 And, I mean, it did. She got her FOX News gig. She -- it worked out precisely
23 how she'd always planned for it to, but she knew better.

24 Q Uh-huh. Who else was in that category of people that went along with it
25 who, in your view, knew better or knew that going along with it was not based on fact?

1 A That --

2 Q He or she?

3 A Yeah. Give me just one second here.

4 I -- yes. I -- I want to be more gracious in my comments going forward, so let me
5 put it this way, because, again, this is the best -- it's my assessment. It's not --

6 Q Yeah.

7 A I don't know. Perhaps Kayleigh really does think that we -- that Trump won
8 the election.

9 I -- I mean, I assume -- I don't think Kellyanne Conway thinks that we -- that Trump
10 won the election. I don't know that she's actually amplified the big lie. I think
11 she's -- I'm not positive. I think she's probably danced around it.

12 But I think -- I think most people around him know. I think Ronna McDaniel
13 knows that they lost. I'll put it -- the only people I think are true believers are like
14 Dan Scavino, Johnny McEntee, Meadows to some degree. But, no, I think Jason Miller
15 knows they lost the election, but it's -- I think he -- he knows he's in a position to profit off
16 of staying in that orbit, and --

17 Q Yeah.

18 A Yeah.

19 Q In terms of the internal discussions that you're aware of, how about
20 Members of Congress? How about Scott Perry or Jim Jordan, who you know well, or
21 Matt Gaetz? Were they playing a role in sort of fueling these notions of a possible
22 second term, of widespread voter fraud, that sort of thing?

23 A So it's a good question. And I'm not -- I am not close to Jordan the way that
24 I used to be, so it's hard to make an assessment.

25 I'll say this. Like, Jody Hice recently came up because he's running for secretary

1 of State in Georgia. I think Jody Hice really believes it. I think -- I always knew him to
2 be -- like, he was the guy who would pray at the beginning of Freedom Caucus meetings.
3 He's a decent person. I don't think that he would knowingly amplify a lie. I think he
4 truly believes it was stolen.

5 I think Jim genuinely believes it was stolen.

6 Q Uh-huh.

7 A I would put Scott -- I think most of the Freedom Caucus guys genuinely think
8 it was stolen.

9 Q Okay. How about Members of Congress who go the other way? You
10 know, there is some reporting about Chip Roy and Mike Lee today that they were sort of
11 advising that some of the strategy was not a good idea. Do you have any sense about
12 Members of Congress on the other side?

13 A I -- I'll say this, because it's -- I -- it's just -- it gets hard when I'm speculating,
14 especially because a lot of them, I just -- I haven't worked with them that many years.

15 Q And I appreciate that.

16 A Yeah.

17 Q I don't mean to ask you to speculate. I'm more thinking about your
18 conversations or things that you -- you're aware of from your personal knowledge.

19 A My understanding -- my understanding was Kevin McCarthy knew
20 that -- that the President had lost, because I do know that there was at least one
21 conversation with Meadows about, Hey, are we trying to bring him around to conceding?

22 I know --

23 Q Conversation with McCarthy and Meadows that you're familiar with?

24 A Yes. I was not present for it, but I know it took place.

25 Q Okay.

1 A And I know he had similar conversations with McConnell, but McConnell's
2 never amplified the big lie.

3 Q Uh-huh.

4 A I'm trying to think beyond that. I mean, I speak -- I don't want to drag
5 people into this who were not part of it, but I speak to a lot of Members of Congress who
6 I think privately just say they would like to see him move on from it. But I don't know
7 that --

8 Q Yeah.

9 A Yeah.

10 Q I see. Okay.

11 [REDACTED] I'm going to stop for a minute and see if Mr. Schiff or if
12 Mr. Aguilar -- if any of our members have any questions.

13 Mr. Schiff. [REDACTED] I do have a couple questions, if I could.

14 [REDACTED] Please. Yes.

15 Mr. Schiff. Just to follow up on Meadows and the conversation, Ms. Griffin, that
16 you mentioned between Meadows and McCarthy, I know you weren't privy for it. Do
17 you know who was privy to that conversation that would be able to speak to it?

18 Ms. Griffin. So I'd heard it from Cassidy Hutchinson, who I believe the
19 committee either has or will be speaking with. So it is secondhand, but she had shared
20 with me -- I believe she was present for the conversation -- that they discussed efforts to
21 try to bring the President around to conceding and to moving on.

22 Mr. Schiff. And any other details you can tell us about what you heard
23 secondhand about that conversation?

24 Ms. Griffin. Honestly, that was it. Just simply the -- the notion of, like,
25 physically getting him out of the building and getting him to move on at some point.

1 Mr. Schiff. Now, I've --

2 Ms. Griffin. She could shed that light, though.

3 Mr. Schiff. I'd like to go back to Meadows, because one of the comments you
4 made was after the court reporter lost the connection but I don't think we went back to,
5 and that is, you described Meadows as talking out of both sides of his mouth. And you
6 described that in the context of a conversation originally that you had where he was
7 suggesting that he was going to talk Trump through the stages of grief, I think you put it.
8 But then you would see him walking these characters, as you've described them, into the
9 Oval Office.

10 So can you drill down a little further on, was this Meadows just as an opportunist,
11 telling people what they wanted to hear? How do you -- or just being too weak to stand
12 up to the President when the President started buying into this big lie about the election?

13 Ms. Griffin. It's a good question, and I'm not entirely sure I have the answer on
14 it, because I've -- trust me, I've tried to understand the motivation myself.

15 I -- yes. There -- so there was -- A, I'm certain I, at some point, had a
16 conversation shortly after in which Meadows seemed to at least acknowledge the loss.
17 And then I later had the conversation with him that was he and I and Ben Williamson,
18 where he said, But what if I -- you know, I told you we were going to have another term?

19 So it's hard to characterize someone else's thinking, but I have to imagine he kind
20 of bought into what he was selling. That said -- oh, go ahead.

21 Mr. Schiff. No. I was going to say, you know, the conversation you had where
22 he said, What if I told you we're going to have another term, that doesn't necessarily
23 mean that he bought the lie about fraud. It could mean also that --

24 Ms. Griffin. Well, that makes sense. That's a good point, yeah.

25 Mr. Schiff. -- he found another -- there was another way notwithstanding to stay

1 in office.

2 Ms. Griffin. That's a very good point. That's a very good point. I -- and it very
3 well could have meant that based on what we saw with the outreach to the Department
4 of Justice and to some of these States, like Georgia, where he traveled down to.

5 I -- I don't know what motivated him, because I know that he -- as I mentioned,
6 there was the McCarthy call, and there was definitely a McConnell conversation, at least
7 one, where he indicated something totally different than what he would then go actively
8 do in the West Wing, which was bring in people who were amplifying the lies.

9 And also, I didn't mention, but Cleta Mitchell was one of them. So I -- I don't
10 know his motivation. I've -- I've come to realize, as I've stepped back from this, that I
11 think that he has a long history of kind of speaking out of both sides of his mouth. I
12 don't know the motivation, but that certainly -- the behavior seems to display that.

13 Mr. Schiff. With respect to Kayleigh McEnany, you describe what she did in
14 terms of amplifying the false claim about the election. Did you have private
15 conversations with her, though, where she indicated she understood they had lost
16 and -- and her private conversations where it was a contradiction to what she was saying
17 publicly?

18 Ms. Griffin. No. So I do want to be careful. I -- my assessment that she
19 knows better is based solely on what I think she knows. Just -- Kayleigh and I actually
20 had had a falling out in October, and we were not speaking beyond, like, what we were
21 required to in a work capacity at that point. So I never confronted her on it. I maybe
22 should have.

23 It's purely my assessment that she -- she knew better, because I do know her to
24 be, actually, a very thoughtful person who researches things and looks into them. And
25 I -- I did not see that demonstrated in some of the big lie amplification that I saw her

1 doing on Hannity and elsewhere.

2 Mr. Schiff. And was the fallout a work-related fallout?

3 Ms. Griffin. Yeah. I -- just -- it's not really germane to this, but I'll share this for
4 the -- for context, but the -- [REDACTED] -- so I had never
5 done TV in a Trump capacity. By design, I did not want to be, for the rest of my life,
6 branded a Trump spokesperson. Too late for that. [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED] by Meadows to do TV, basically show some
8 signs of life from the West Wing. So I did a number of TV hits during that period.

9 And, basically, when [REDACTED] I think she felt like I
10 had overstepped or something and just kind of stopped speaking to me. And we never
11 really resolved the matter. But that was -- I mean, that was honestly -- that was all it
12 was over. It was very minor, but we just -- we just never really spoke again.

13 Mr. Schiff. You mentioned Rick Grenell, and I certainly share the assessment you
14 gave. Did you have interactions with Ratcliffe as well on the subject of the election loss?

15 Ms. Griffin. No, not the election loss. I do remember that kind of -- there was
16 a -- we were at a rally somewhere, I want to say it was in North Carolina, and Ratcliffe did
17 that ODNI briefing about thwarting some sort of foreign interference in the election.
18 You all may recall this, but he basically did like -- and the President was furious over it,
19 because it stepped on his rally, so all the cables cut into this ODNI briefing. But I do
20 recall him also -- yeah.

21 The Reporter. My -- the reporter lost the sound again. I'm sorry.

22 Ms. Griffin. Oh, no problem. I'll hold while you reconnect.

23 The Reporter. Yes, thank you.

24 The Reporter. I'm back in, but it's been breaking up.

25 [REDACTED] Martin, we're having trouble hearing. I don't know if it's your

1 connection or what, but --

2 The Reporter. I think it's -- I think it might be my connection unfortunately. I'm
3 very sorry.

4 [REDACTED] Okay. No problem. Just let us know again if you lose sound, but
5 we're going to assume you're back on.

6 All right. Ms. Griffin, go ahead where you left off.

7 The Reporter. Okay. Can you -- if you can give me a second, I can try to switch
8 to a different connection.

9 [REDACTED] Okay. If you think that would be --

10 The Reporter. And I don't -- don't know if that will help or not.

11 [REDACTED] Okay. We'll wait.

12 The Reporter. Can you hear me now?

13 [REDACTED] Yes.

14 The Reporter. Okay. I think this might be a more secure connection here.

15 [REDACTED] Great.

16 The Reporter. Hopefully it stays that way.

17 [REDACTED] Okay. All right. Thanks, Martin.

18 All right. Ms. Griffin, let's go back on the record.

19 I mean, actually, Martin, maybe if you just sort of share with us where you left off?

20 The Reporter. Sure. It was -- she said: You all may recall this, but he typically
21 did like -- and the President was furious over it, because it stepped on his rally, I believe,
22 so all the cables cut into this ODNI briefing.

23 Can you hear me?

24 [REDACTED] You're muted now.

25 The Reporter. That's -- it's breaking up again.

1 Ms. Griffin. Can you hear me now?

2 [REDACTED] Yes, we can hear you now. Go ahead.

3 The Reporter. Hang on one second.

4 I'm going to have the other reporter take over at this point. I'm sorry.

5 Ms. Griffin. All right.

6 [REDACTED] It's okay.

7 Mr. Cooper. Yeah. One other thing, Tim. I don't know if this has anything to
8 do with it, but your picture has become kind of blurry, at least on my end.

9 [REDACTED] I see. Okay. Yeah. We may have bandwidth issues. Well,
10 let's go a little bit longer and maybe take a little lunch break.

11 Chuck, does that work for you, if we go another little while, get to a stopping
12 point, and then take about 30 minutes?

13 Mr. Cooper. I'm fine with it at my end. I haven't conferred with my client
14 about that. I think we had initially understood that you expected this to be about a
15 3-hour session. I know --

16 [REDACTED] Yeah.

17 Mr. Cooper. -- Ms. Griffin wants to cooperate until you're exhausted.
18 But, Alyssa, is this -- would that be all right with you on your end?

19 Ms. Griffin. I mean, my preference would be if we power through, but if not --

20 [REDACTED] Sure.

21 Ms. Griffin. -- I'm fine to do that.

22 [REDACTED] No, no. We can power through it.

23 Ms. Griffin. I only worry because I do have a -- I have something I have to take at
24 3:00, which, I mean, we're not coming up against that. But, if we can, I'd like to just go.

25 [REDACTED] Again, you -- we will accommodate that, and I'm confident we'll be

1 done by 3:00 if we just keep going.

2 Ms. Griffin. Chuck, does that work for you?

3 [REDACTED] Yeah, you take 2 minutes, then. Anytime you need it, that's great.

4 But we'll keep powering forward.

5 Ms. Griffin. Great.

6 Mr. Cooper. That's great.

7 Ms. Griffin. Okay. Good.

8 So picking up where I left off from Congressman Schiff's question, so very briefly,
9 there was -- we were in, I believe, the rally in North Carolina. ODNI -- Ratcliffe did a
10 briefing out of the blue about thwarting some kind of foreign interference in the election.
11 The President was mad about it, A, because it cut into his rally coverage. But, B, I
12 just -- I remember him expressing on the plane afterward that he's, like, why is he putting
13 this out there? Why is he putting this out there?

14 And I don't want to speculate, but I do think that, like, he -- he didn't like this idea
15 that we stopped something, because it would have been another excuse he could have
16 pointed to, which was, you know, foreign interference was one of the, you know, issues.

17 But that was the only time I remember dealing with Ratcliffe in this capacity.

18 [REDACTED] Understood.

19 Mr. Schiff. Can you explain that a little further, what the President's objection
20 was?

21 Ms. Griffin. So he was -- well, it was, first and foremost, that it cut into his press
22 conference, but then he said, Why is he putting this out there? Why is he putting this
23 out there that we stopped interference?

24 So he didn't quite explain what he had an objection to, but my reading of it, which
25 I think is accurate, is he would have liked to have that as, you know, something he could

1 point his finger to as -- you know, rather than -- he didn't like when people said our
2 elections were safe and secure. Obviously he fired my friend Chris Krebs for saying as
3 much. So I imagine it was because of that.

4 Mr. Schiff. Thank you.

5 [REDACTED] I yield back to you.

6 [REDACTED] Thanks, Mr. Schiff.

7 BY [REDACTED]

8 Q Yeah. Just to pick up on that, Ms. Griffin, we're jumping around a little bit,
9 but Bill Barr is another one who said, publicly and directly to the President, We have
10 looked and have not found evidence of systemic fraud sufficient to undermine the
11 confidence in the outcome in any particular State.

12 And the President reacted very negatively to the fact that he said it. Do you
13 remember --

14 The Reporter. [REDACTED]

15 [REDACTED] Yes?

16 The Reporter. [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED] Yes.

18 The Reporter. Can you hear me? Okay. I'm sorry. Both of us are having
19 connections problems, and it's cutting in and out, and I don't know what's going on,
20 frankly.

21 [REDACTED] Yeah. Me neither.

22 The Reporter. I have nobody on video at this point, and --

23 Mr. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] one suggestion. Something we might be able to try is if we
24 just -- if Chuck and the conference room go off camera. That sometimes helps with
25 bandwidth issues. So it's just you and Ms. Griffin.

1 [REDACTED] Yeah.

2 [REDACTED] The fewest number of cameras that are on will help limit the
3 bandwidth. We tried that in the past. So we can try that and see if that makes any
4 difference.

5 [REDACTED] Okay.

6 Mr. Cooper. Sure. I'm happy to do that. That would probably be a good idea
7 from the get-go on my end, so I'm happy to do that.

8 [REDACTED] All right. So I'll stay on. Yeah. Ms. Griffin will stay on.

9 Mr. Schiff. [REDACTED] I'm in motion. If that's causing any issue, I can sign out
10 completely if that -- I may be contributing to the problem.

11 [REDACTED] I don't know, Mr. Schiff. I think it's the camera when yours is off.
12 That often is the one that solves the bandwidth. Let's try this.

13 And, again, Martin or Debra, if you have any issues going forward, just let us
14 know.

15 The Reporter. Thank you.

16 [REDACTED]

17 Q Okay. So just tell me if you remember anything, Ms. Griffin, about Bill Barr,
18 you know, his position on the election and the President's reaction to that.

19 A I -- the only thing I remember was -- so that statement went out, and then I
20 remember Barr was summoned to the White House. And I just remember everyone was
21 kind of walking on eggshells when he arrived, because we all thought he was going to get
22 fired. But I didn't actually witness anything specifically that the President said. I just
23 know he was furious. And the speculation was he was going to fire Barr. But I
24 think -- the AG was very good at dealing with Trump's moods, and I think he basically got
25 him to a place to hold off on firing. And I do think Meadows stepped in on that too.

1 Q Okay. But you weren't involved in any of those --

2 A I wasn't present for it, no.

3 Q -- meetings or discussions?

4 Okay. How about the Krebs firing that you mentioned? Did you have any
5 involvement or any direct conversation with the President or others about the decision to
6 fire him?

7 A No. Saw it on Twitter. And same thing with Mark Esper, my former boss.
8 I saw the tweet go out when I was walking onto the White House campus, and got
9 bombarded by reporters.

10 But I -- and just for the record, I had convinced Trump directly on two prior
11 occasions to not fire Esper. He asked me pointblank. He said, I don't think he's with
12 me. I think he's against me.

13 And I said, Sir, he's with you on every major issue, but, also, it would signal chaos
14 in your administration if you fired your Defense Secretary in an election year.

15 And he held off, but then, after the election, fired him.

16 Q Yeah. And when you say not with me, was it your sense, Ms. Griffin, that it
17 was sort of loyalty or perceived --

18 A Yeah.

19 Q -- loyalty that was the credential that was most important to him with
20 respect to Esper or others?

21 A Yes. It was -- loyalty was -- it was always that. It was like you're -- you're
22 not -- like, if you were one of his guys. And he always was, like, I would say, deeply
23 paranoid about if somebody was -- was one of his people. He asked me on numerous
24 occasions about firing very senior staff over the perception that they weren't loyal to him.

25 Q Yeah. Who else was on the list that you recall the President saying or

1 speculating about whether he should fire someone for not being perceived loyal?

2 A Esper, the most notable. Matt Pottinger, who was -- oversaw the China
3 portfolio for the NSC, and who I had worked with a lot at DOD. He said, I heard he's not
4 one of my guys. He's not with me. I hear he's a leak.

5 And I said, basically, if you care about being tough on China, Matt Pottinger is the
6 most important policy analyst you could have on your team. And he didn't fire him.

7 And he asked about Marc Short a lot, and I always said, Marc Short's with you.
8 He's great for the Vice President.

9 But, yeah, those were his main -- his main people.

10 Q How about Chris Wray? Did you ever hear him say things like that about
11 the FBI Director?

12 A Oh, yeah. He hated Chris Wray. He just never personally asked me about
13 it. And he had a lot of -- he had a big echo chamber with any of -- like, Meadows
14 was -- had it out for Chris Wray. Those people would all reenforce those ideas. But he
15 never personally -- other than just like he's feckless, he's this, he never asked me about
16 firing him.

17 Q I see. And was it on -- again, your understanding secondhand, was it same
18 issue, sort of Wray isn't sufficiently loyal somehow? Not a competence issue, but a
19 loyalty one?

20 A Loyalty issue. And with Chris Wray and -- who was the deputy AG? They
21 also -- those guys fell into the Obamagate conspiracy theory that he was very consumed
22 with, so he didn't trust any of them, and was -- and I think he at one point was looking for
23 ways to fire Chris Wray, but I think it's more complicated, if I recall, with an FBI director.
24 But he never asked me specifically. I was just privy to like him bashing him.

25 Q Yeah. He did -- we have a lot of evidence about his discussions about

1 potentially replacing Bill Barr's replacement, the Acting Attorney General, Jeff Rosen.
2 That was after you left, but did you have any knowledge of, discussions about changing
3 leadership at the Department of Justice after Barr's resignation?

4 A No. Only saw the public reporting after the fact.

5 Q Got it. Okay. Okay.

6 All right. Well, let me -- again, we're skipping around, but back to the day that
7 the election was called. Did that prompt any discussion to which you were privy about
8 concession? Like, did you or others say, Hey, AP called it, and the networks have called
9 it. Should we write a concession speech or should we talk about concession?

10 Tell me whether there was any discussion along those lines after November 7.

11 A There -- there was none to my knowledge. And, admittedly, I probably
12 should have more proactively, whether gone to the President or to the chief, and said,
13 What are we doing? But I think I saw it at the time as not really my lane. That was
14 more the campaign's lane.

15 Q Uh-huh.

16 A But I'd never once heard the word "concession," "concession speech"
17 uttered. And the only conversations around the notion of him conceding were that
18 conversation I had with Meadows about, like, he's going to go off to Mar-a-Lago and into
19 the sunset, which never ended up happening.

20 Q How about the transition? Did you ever hear from anyone about resistance
21 to transition planning? We can't yet start setting up meetings, that sort of thing?

22 A So there was the Jared one where it was just like he just shut down the idea
23 that we should reach out to the Biden folks. And then I was hearing from my friends at
24 DOD that they were getting, like, stonewalled from the White House when they tried to
25 work with the incoming administration. But it was mostly that. It was external. It

1 wasn't internal.

2 Oh, and then I'd heard -- I think there was another McEntee memo around that, if
3 I recall. I think -- I'm pretty sure that there was either a memo or a directive of some
4 sort that went out that basically said, Don't -- like, do not work with the transition.

5 Q Not work with the transition or not look for other jobs. It sounds like --

6 A Yeah.

7 Q -- you reacted to that with your staff. Okay.

8 Now, you told us about a conversation you had with Meadows in which he said he
9 was going to bring the President around somehow, at least early, like soon after the
10 election, and that that changed.

11 Did you ever hear anyone else say things like that -- we'll work with him, we'll
12 bring him around, he'll eventually get there -- talking about the President, that sort of
13 reassuring message to you?

14 A Not really. No. I think -- like, maybe secondhand, but I didn't really -- and
15 to be honest, I was very checked out at that point.

16 Q Yeah. Yeah. Other than the one conversation you relayed to us about
17 can you believe I lost to this f'ing guy, the President -- did you ever hear him say anything
18 beyond that one comment, acknowledging that he had lost?

19 A No, other than that press conference I referenced.

20 Q You did mention that.

21 A Yeah. And for what it's worth, I should mention this. It is possible that by
22 saying, Can you believe I lost to this guy, he was expressing -- I've gone back and forth in
23 my mind on this -- disbelief that he lost to him. In the moment, I took it as him
24 acknowledging that he lost, but the more I've thought about it, he may mean the exact
25 opposite.

1 Q Yeah. It's hard to know what he meant. The words were, Can you believe
2 I lost to this f'ing guy, and --

3 A Yes.

4 Q -- it's sort of disparaging Biden as surprisingly having beaten him.

5 A Right. Right.

6 Q Yeah. Yeah. Quoting again an interview that you gave: I know there
7 were a number of people who conveyed that he was taking the election fraud talk too far
8 early on, but I think that that took on a life of its own. And early on, I truly believe the
9 President knew, when I was still in the White House in November, he knew that he had
10 lost, and it was something that was almost tacitly acknowledged, like, we're going to
11 make this painful, but we know what happened. And then something turned. I don't
12 know if it was the wrong advisers getting to him with bad information or what.

13 So was there a moment, Ms. Griffin, when there was sort of a pivot or a turn when
14 it went from acknowledgement to let's fight this?

15 A Sort of, but I can't totally pinpoint what caused it. So what I was referring
16 to in those -- like, those early days, like, Pat Cipollone, I know, White House counsel, had
17 tried to get to him early on about, like, all right, here's like the legal obligations you have
18 in terms of like a transition and all that. And Pat, to my knowledge, got like totally
19 boxed out because he took that position.

20 Q Uh-huh.

21 A I'm trying to think who the other voices were. I mean, Marc Short was
22 always one of those voices. Even Larry Kudlow, I recall -- I seem to recall he was in the
23 camp of sort of the Hope Hicks, like, let's go do a highlights tour and, like, make people
24 miss us sort of thing.

25 Q Yeah.

1 A But I think -- I think most advisers who, like, worked in the West Wing were
2 kind of in that place of like, he's going to come around, we'll see, like -- I'm not sure when
3 or where, but it was the outside forces mostly who were, like, campaign, staff, or like
4 tangential to the campaign that I think were -- they were the ones who were really
5 getting in his head, and I would put Meadows in that category of, like, we need to fight
6 this.

7 I think it -- I think it changed -- there was that first wave of sort of campaign
8 denialism, and then that second where it was more like Sidney Powell, Rudy Giuliani,
9 Kayleigh, and I think -- oh, and Jenna Ellis. I think that's when it started to shift, and a lot
10 of the maybe more credible figures in Trump world kind of scurried away, and it was
11 those folks fighting it.

12 And I almost think -- something I've observed about him is, the more isolated he
13 feels, the more dug in he can get. And I think that kind of happened in that moment.

14 Q Yeah. Bill Barr described it in his book recently as the clown car, that --

15 A Yeah.

16 Q -- Rudy Giuliani and his team became increasingly influential, and --

17 The Reporter. I lost that question.

18 [REDACTED] Sorry, Martin?

19 The Reporter. [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED] Yeah.

21 The Reporter. I lost that question. If you could start that one over. I'm sorry.

22 [REDACTED] Sure.

23 [REDACTED]

24 Q I just was going to say that former Attorney General Barr, in his book, has
25 described the clown car as sort of coming in and becoming increasingly influential, the

1 clown car meaning Giuliani and his legal team, and other advisers, like Cipollone and even
2 Stepien and the campaign staff were marginalized.

3 Is that consistent, Ms. Griffin, with your observation?

4 A That -- that is, yeah. I know from -- I know that at some point, Jenna and
5 Rudy basically showed up at Rosslyn and said, like, We're running the show now.

6 But, yes, that -- that second iteration was -- I think a lot of the smarter voices in
7 the room and the people who maybe would have given at least like decent counsel were
8 completely marginalized, and it was really just those characters who were getting to the
9 President.

10 Q Got it. Okay. It sounds to me like you never felt like you were personally
11 asked to go on television and say anything that -- with which you felt uncomfortable,
12 because you weren't the in-front-of-the-camera person. You were more managing
13 communications behind the scenes. Is that generally accurate?

14 A Yeah. And I did have the -- I had the level of removal of being on the
15 official side, so I -- I could -- I wouldn't say hide behind, but I could kind of hide behind the
16 Hatch Act. Like, it was the -- not my business to be talking about the election one way
17 or the other. Nor -- and to be honest, nor was I being asked to.

18 I was kind of -- I was probably -- I started being marginalized in like late October.
19 I think people got the sense of, like, I was -- didn't really care if he won or lost sort of
20 thing.

21 Q Yeah. Yeah. And we're leading up to your decision to resign.

22 A Yeah.

23 Q I want to talk a little bit about, you know, did there come a point in time
24 where you felt like you had enough and it was time for you to -- before the end of the
25 administration, January 20th, short of that, you wanted to quit?

1 A Yeah. And as I mentioned earlier, I had very seriously thought about
2 resigning after George Floyd's death and that period. It was very hard to tie my name to
3 the way that it was being handled by the White House. But I made the decision to stay.
4 And I remember the question in my mind was, if I leave, who is going to replace me?
5 And, honestly, what I was most fearful of is it was going to be Jenna Ellis. And I'm like,
6 what things might happen if she's there?

7 So I stayed. I -- I knew by midsummer -- I knew, in general, I would not be
8 staying in the West Wing if he won reelection. I would either go back to DOD or the
9 private sector.

10 But as soon as he lost, like, on the day that the election was called, I knew I
11 was -- it was only a matter of time until I was going to resign. I figured I'd get through
12 Thanksgiving holiday. I mean, there's the technical things of like, I wanted to keep my
13 health insurance and figure out like the next steps --

14 Q Sure.

15 A -- because I was standing up my consulting firm, which there
16 was -- I -- literally, the conversation with my husband was like, I want to get my health
17 insurance through the end of November and then I'll resign.

18 So then I left on December 4th. Meadows had asked me to stay longer, but I just
19 couldn't.

20 Q Yeah. I'll just read to you what you've said publicly about your resignation
21 and ask you to comment.

22 "I made the decision to step down in December because I saw where this was
23 heading, and I wasn't comfortable being a part of sharing this message to the public that
24 the election results might go a different way. I didn't see that to be where the facts lay."

25 You said, I left because I was afraid where these myths could take us. I knew I

1 couldn't influence outcomes. When this runaway train of election was stolen got wind
2 underneath it, that was when it was time for me to step down. I wasn't going to mislead
3 people.

4 A So I -- yeah. I very much stand by all those remarks. The one thing that I
5 would -- I would clarify is the I saw where this was heading. I -- I never could have
6 foreseen that January 6th would have come.

7 Q I see.

8 A I never, in my heart of hearts, thought that it would have come to violence.
9 I really thought that it was going to be just destructive to our democracy, divisive.
10 People were going to, you know, spend the next 10 years litigating it and hate each other
11 more than ever. I did not actually see it going as horrifically as it did.

12 Q I understand.

13 When you say, I was scared or I was afraid where these myths could take us, you
14 meant more sort of institutional threats to democracy, not in the direction --

15 A More institutional. Yeah. I mean, listen, what happened --
16 The Reporter. I'm sorry. There was a little bit of overtalk, and I'm losing it.
17 Ms. Griffin. Oh.

18

BY 

19 Q The question was: You thought where these myths could take us was
20 institutional threat to democracy, not a violence at the Capitol on January 6th. Is that
21 right?

22 A That's correct. Though, in retrospect, I do think what happened
23 January 6th was the logical conclusion, I did not foresee it at that time.

24 Q Uh-huh. Did you consult with anybody before you decided to resign? Did
25 you need to?

1 A You -- as assistant to the President, I did have to do like -- there's some
2 formal ethics paperwork that I signed off on, and I didn't even like -- usually you would
3 disclose, like, what your next thing is, what the pay is. All of that has to become public.

4 I didn't have a damn thing lined up. Like, I knew I would be fine. Like, because I
5 was going to stand up a consulting firm, which I now have done. But, like, I just -- I left
6 with nothing lined up just because it was time to go. But I did do all the ethics
7 paperwork and consulted them before leaving.

8 Q Did you tell President Trump directly about your decision to resign?

9 A I didn't directly.

10 Q Did you write him -- you know, write him a letter or --

11 A I did a -- I did a statement. It was a bit of a -- it was kind of -- Meadows
12 wanted me to put something glowing out, and I did. I very carefully chose my words to
13 say Trump administration and rattled off specific accomplishments that I was proud of,
14 like Operation Warp Speed, some other things.

15 But, since then, the former President's thrown it back in my face and said, you
16 know, Look at the statement she put out. She loved me and now she criticizes me.

17 But it was things I was actually proud of in the administration. And I did that,
18 honestly, just to -- out of deference to Meadows. He wanted me to say something nice.

1

2 [1:16 p.m.]

3

BY [REDACTED]

4

Q Yeah. Meadows encouraged you to stay for a little while -- Meadows encouraged you to stay for a little longer than you wanted to, but when you ultimately did leave, was he resistant still? Tell me more about your conversation with him.

7

A If I have the days right, I sat down with him and said, "I'm planning to resign. I would like to" -- I think it was either tomorrow or at the end of the week. And he said, "Can you please not?" This is when he said, "What if I told you, you weren't going to be here longer?" And then he asked me, I believe, to stay for 2 weeks. And I said I can't.

And I just -- and he respected it. He gave me a hug. I think he cried a little bit. And that was when I decided, I went and wrote a nice statement and made sure I left -- I tried to leave gracefully.

14

Q Got it.

15

A But I did --

16

Q Go ahead.

17

A Are you good?

18

Q Yeah. Go ahead.

19

A I gave the, like, exclusive that I was resigning to The Washington Post, and I made it a point to share with the reporter to say, I said, I wanted it to say in the headline this is a tacit nod to the fact that the election was lost by Donald Trump, and she did include that. Because I just thought it was important symbolically to show, like, we lost.

23

Q Understood. I want to talk a little bit about the lead-up to January 6th now.

25

After your resignation, Ms. Farah, I assume -- and we know from texts that you

1 stayed in touch with people at the White House.

2 Do you remember sort of who was -- with whom you were -- who was still working
3 at the White House -- with whom you were regularly in touch between when you left and
4 when the administration ended?

5 A Yeah. Ben Williamson I talked to. We've been friends for years and we
6 kept up. And he -- I kind of left my team under him. I recommended to Meadows that
7 he kind of be who they report to.

8 And then I talked to Roma Daravi who worked for me. She was, like, the head of
9 media booking. Sarah Matthews, who was deputy press secretary. I talk to Cassidy
10 Hutchinson quite a bit.

11 Everyone I talked to was junior to me, not that -- I mean, only relevant in the
12 sense that, like, I wasn't really talking to many of the decisionmakers. I mentioned, like,
13 the one-off text I sent to Jared.

14 But, yeah, I think that's pretty much the universe of people I was talking to.

15 Q And was it your sense, Ms. Griffin, that all of them, those junior folks, shared
16 your view about the fact that the election had been lost, that the election fraud talk was
17 not helpful? Was it your sense they shared that view?

18 A Yes. Definitely Ben. Definitely Sarah Matthews. Roma, I can't speak for,
19 it never came up. And Cassidy, unclear to me.

20 Cassidy, I kind of mentored and I tried to kind of nudge her to see it and to think
21 about next steps, because I think she was like 23 years old and she needed to be thinking
22 about her next job.

23 But I know, yeah, Ben and Sarah definitely knew we lost.

24 Q Okay. Before you left, did you hear any discussion about January 6th,
25 about the joint session or any planning around that?

1 A No. Because I resigned December 4th, but I honestly had barely been in
2 because, as I mentioned, I took basically 2 weeks for Thanksgiving. So I didn't.

3 But once I resigned, within a week, I signed the Georgia Republican Party as a
4 client because I was basically for one month helping them with the Senate runoff. And
5 that's when I started to hear about it in that capacity, because they were concerned
6 obviously about -- obviously talking about election fraud was not helpful to trying to win
7 the race down there.

8 So it came up in that capacity. But I didn't think much of it. I just
9 thought -- actually, in my mind, I didn't actually put together that the big January 6th rally
10 that the President was hyping, his, like, Million Man March, I didn't put together that that
11 was the same day that the electoral college vote was.

12 Q I see. Okay. So a couple things in there.

13 One, did you have concerns when you were working for the Senate candidates in
14 Georgia that all this talk about election fraud was going to depress Republican turnout
15 and potentially negatively affect the Georgia runoff?

16 A Yeah. Absolutely. So I wrote what we called a messaging Bible for the
17 candidates and I was very careful about how they talked about it.

18 And I was on the side of, we didn't even want Trump to come down. He did a
19 rally just, I think, like, a couple days before January 6th.

20 I heard -- I helped bring Ivanka down and Pence did something, and I had Don Jr.
21 write an op-ed. We were trying to, like, use just enough of the Trumpiness to, like, get
22 people out, but we didn't want him to come because it did exactly that. I mean, he
23 literally said, Your vote doesn't count, it's all rigged. And then we lost.

24 Q He came on January 4th and essentially talked about how election -- there's
25 lack of election integrity in Georgia.

1 A Yeah.

2 Q Two days before -- or 1 day before the runoff.

3 The first public mention that the President makes of January 6th is in a tweet on
4 December 19th, and this is the one that says, "Big protest in D.C., will be wild!"

5 Do you recall when that tweet came out and having any reaction to it?

6 A Yeah. I remember coming out and just it was -- it was just like, "Why is he
7 still doing this?" was my thought. I just remember thinking, like, "Why aren't you with
8 your family enjoying, like, the Christmas holiday?" honestly.

9 Q Okay. Soon after that, there's a lot of discussion between the President
10 and the Vice President and their respective teams about the Vice President's authority.
11 And I know you were close to Marc Short and close to the Vice President himself. You
12 had worked for him.

13 Were you familiar with any of those discussions about that legal issue of the Vice
14 President's authority?

15 A So I tuned -- I completely tuned out for, basically, the Christmas holiday and I
16 think it wasn't until maybe like January 1st, honestly, I think is when I called Marc Short
17 just to check in. And I basically hadn't talked to him since I left other than maybe a text
18 here and there.

19 And he basically -- he never shows his hand, but he basically said the Vice
20 President is getting sound counsel. We're making sure he's hearing all viewpoints.
21 And just be praying for us and thinking about him. And that was basically that.

22 He was indicating to me that he was going to, obviously, do the right thing. And,
23 actually, I do recall that he mentioned to me that they went to White House counsel to
24 try to get, like, an official guidance.

25 Q Yeah.

1 A And if I recall, White House counsel declined to. So instead the Pence
2 lawyers gave the actual guidance. I think it came from Greg.

3 Q Did he share anything, Ms. Griffin, to you about pressure that the President
4 or allies of the President were putting on the Vice President about on the issue of his
5 authority at the joint session?

6 A No, he didn't share that, and understandably, I think. Short and I have
7 been friends for years, but I think he was skeptical because he also knew I was close to
8 Meadows. So he wasn't share -- he did not share much with me. Our conversation
9 was very, like, give my best to the VP kind of thing.

10 Q Got it. Okay. All right.

11 So, again, did you have any inkling prior to the morning of January 6th about the
12 possibility of violence? Had you been privy to any intelligence or anything that gave you
13 a fear that there might be violence that day?

14 A So it was the night before when -- and I'm embarrassed that this didn't occur
15 to me sooner -- that I realized the rally and the electoral were coinciding.

16 So I reached out to Chris Hodgson, who's VP's director of leg affairs, who I
17 assumed was going to be with him that day, and just said, like, hey, thinking about you
18 guys, praying for our guy, hope it's going to be good.

19 He's just like -- said something along the lines of like, I've got such a bad feeling
20 about this, but saying then, like, a smiley face.

21 And that was the first time I felt like, "ugh." And I remember I was -- I
22 spent -- after I resigned, I spent 3 months down in Florida living with my in-laws because
23 we had just bought a house and were renovating. So I was watching it with my
24 mother-in-law and just unfold in real time. And, yeah, I never could've imagined it
25 turned out the way it did.

1 Q Yeah. Were you watching the President's speech at the Ellipse?

2 A We did. We watched -- FOX carried -- I believe carried him and Rudy
3 Giuliani.

4 And I do remember -- well, I don't want to throw this -- I won't say the name, but
5 an individual who's a friend of mine in the Vice President's office texted and said, "Can
6 you believe the spouse of the Vice President's comms director wrote this speech? Like,
7 she should be ashamed, referring to Stephen Miller, because he was personally going
8 after Mike Pence.

9 Q Right. The President in his speech says, "And after this, we're going to walk
10 down, and I'll be there with you, we're going to walk down to the Capitol."

11 Do you remember hearing him declare that he was going to literally go to the
12 Capitol with the crowd?

13 A Yeah. And I remember thinking, like, there's no way. A, I've, like, never
14 seen that man walk very far, but not that that's even particularly far. But I remember
15 thinking there's no way Secret Service clears this.

16 Like, I had read the articles about, like, all the bulletproof glass they had to put up
17 and stuff. There's just absolutely no way they could've had him walk up the street.
18 But I don't think he ever had any intention to either.

19 Q Yeah. Okay. He also said in the same speech, "And Mike Pence is going
20 to have to come through for us. And if he doesn't, that will be a sad day for our country
21 because you're sworn to uphold our Constitution." He's sort of continuing to publicly
22 put pressure on the Vice President when he made those statements.

23 Given that you'd already talked to Marc Short, did you have a reaction? What
24 was your interpretation?

25 A I thought it was just awful. Just like, I mean, in many ways it was the logical

1 conclusion of 4 years of that relationship. But it was very sad. I reached out to some
2 Pence staff, just thinking about them, telling them I was thinking about them.

3 But, yes, he was using, like, his last, his final way to pressure him, which was in the
4 public eye. I know he had been privately doing it beforehand.

5 Q Yeah. Exactly. Let me show you another text. This is exhibit 3. We'll
6 put it up on the screen.

7 I think it might be what you're referring to in terms of your outreach around the
8 time of the speech. It's a text that you -- it's a thread with Cassidy Hutchinson and Jake
9 Sherman, and the top part with Ivanka and the President, I think may be --

10 A Not relevant.

11 Q Yeah, not relevant.

12 At 1:22, the President's speech is from about noon to about 10 after 1. So this is
13 just after it's over. You text Cassidy Hutchinson and Jake Sherman, "I'm sick to my
14 stomach over this. Why isn't POTUS getting better advice? Why knife Pence over
15 something he literally has zero authority to change? Sorry. This is awful."

16 Tell me what you meant by this.

17 A Yeah. Yeah, that must have been over the remarks. I actually don't truly
18 totally remember this text.

19 But, yeah, I mean, I just thought, like, of all the people, if there's one person who's
20 been loyal in the face of, like, the hardest possible times to be loyal to him, it was Mike
21 Pence. And to me, like, and I'm not a legal scholar by any means, this is like clear as day
22 that the Vice President in no way has authority to overturn the election.

23 My point was simply, like, of course Pence can't do it why are you putting -- like, it
24 was such a deflection of blame and, like, trying -- he always needs to place blame on
25 someone else. Like, he couldn't just admit that he lost the election so it has to be

1 Pence's fault.

2 Q Yeah. Did you ever learn, Ms. Griffin, from Mr. Short or others, who was
3 sort of fueling the President's belief or statements that the Vice President did have some
4 kind of authority?

5 A So I learned later -- and some of this is honestly probably from, like, public
6 reporting -- but I know Jenna Ellis had legal theories about it. I know -- there were a
7 number of memos. Like I know there was a John Eastman memo. But they were, like,
8 not strong legal theories. Like, it was really trying to redefine the role of what the VP
9 could do.

10 Q Right. And, again, I'm not as interested in what you've read, I'm more
11 interested in personal knowledge, whether either before or after you left the White
12 House. Anybody sort of shared with you any of the back and forth on that issue?

13 A Not really. Not really at all.

14 Q Same thing go for the submission of alternate electors by State legislators?
15 You have any recollections of discussions of that?

16 A No. Honestly, didn't. Only heard about that in public reporting.

17 Q Yeah. I understand. Okay.

18 Well, about an hour after you sent that text message, the President issues his first
19 tweet of the day.

20 And if we can go to exhibit 4.

21 This is a tweet that he issues after the violence at the Capitol had already begun.
22 And the Capitol -- the barricades, the bike rack barricades, are breached at about 1:10,
23 about when the President stopped speaking, and by 2 o'clock there are people inside the
24 Capitol.

25 And at 2:24, the President tweets, "Mike Pence didn't have the courage to do

1 what should've been done to protect our country and our Constitution, giving States a
2 chance to certify a corrected set of facts, not the fraudulent or inaccurate ones, which
3 they were asked to previously certify. USA demands the truth."

4 Do you remember seeing this? And what was your reaction?

5 A I saw it, and I was just furious, because at this point you'd also seen the, like,
6 "hang Mike Pence" signs.

7 Q Yeah.

8 A And I could not believe it. Like, listen, this man goes low, but this was
9 extraordinarily low for him, and while Pence was still in the Capitol and, like, immediately
10 in danger, to put this out.

11 And I, just for the record, which I don't think we have it in here, I had put out a
12 tweet commending Pence for the statement that he put out just essentially saying, like,
13 we're a Nation of laws and not men, confirming that he was correct in his decision.

14 But, yeah, I was furious by this.

15 Q Yeah. So then did you take action yourself by putting out your own tweet?

16 A Yes. And I --

17 Q I'll show it to you. It's exhibit 5, is the next one, if we can put it on the
18 screen so you can see.

19 Just 4 minutes later, Ms. Griffin, you say, "Stop this now. Capitol Police protect
20 and defend the People's house. We back the blue. This is insanity." And you're
21 retweeting a press account of the violence at the Capitol.

22 Why did you feel it was necessary to issue this tweet after the President criticizing
23 Mike Pence just a few minutes before?

24 A Well, it was -- so I was texting with a number of people in the Capitol, not
25 White House officials. I worked in the Capitol for many years, so I'm friends with a lot of

1 the Capitol Hill reporters, including Jake Sherman. And he was texting me. He's, like,
2 "The Capitol is under siege, Alyssa." He's, like, "What is going on?"

3 So I was worried for the safety of friends of mine. I was worried for the safety of
4 the Vice President.

5 So, yeah, this was, like, the first reaction. And I think what really, "We back the
6 blue" part, is I was just so furious to see Republicans who were so obsessed with saying,
7 you know, we support the police, attacking police officers. It just was so hypocritical.

8 Q Yeah. So after you issued this tweet, the President issues another tweet.
9 Let's turn to exhibit 6.

10 So another, looks like, 13 minutes go by and the first -- the next thing the
11 President says is, "Please support our Capitol Police and law enforcement. They are
12 truly on the side of our country. Stay peaceful."

13 Do you remember this tweet and what was your reaction to this?

14 A Yeah, I remember. And it's, like -- no. Like, it just doesn't hold up. I
15 mean, talk to Michael Fanone or any of the Capitol Police officers, more than 60, who
16 were injured that day.

17 And this is where, I mean, somewhere in this window -- I'm sure we'll get to
18 it -- I -- because I did -- I reached out to Meadows both via text and via phone. There
19 were so many things he could've done to deescalate.

20 And, like -- and I say this -- we'll get to -- but in the Meadow text -- Meadows
21 text -- like, if the President isn't going to say it, what would have stopped any single White
22 House official from walking out, going to what we call Pebble Beach, where every
23 network has a camera, every cable has a camera, and saying, "We condemn this. The
24 election wasn't stolen. Please dissipate. Please leave the Capitol."

25 But I, respectfully, that's where I lost respect for so many people I used to care

1 about in that administration, is a moment that called for courage so few people stepped
2 up to do anything.

3 Q Yeah. I mean, you could read this tweet as essentially encouraging people
4 to remain, right?

5 A Yes. Yes.

6 Q It says stay, but be peaceful, right?

7 A Yeah.

8 Q Don't injure cops, but stay at the Capitol.

9 A Exactly. By the way, it doesn't say anything about Members of Congress
10 who were in danger or the Vice President, so who were clearly the targets of harassment.

11 Q Right. So it sounds like your view is that this is woefully inadequate,
12 doesn't go far enough to quell the violence? It's the inappropriate response for that
13 moment?

14 A Correct. Absolutely inappropriate.

15 Q Where you then issue another tweet yourself. Let's turn to that. That's
16 exhibit 7. And this is at 2:54, so just another 14 minutes or so after.

17 "Condemn this now @realDonaldTrump. You are the only one they will listen
18 to. For our country." You're almost sort of pleading publicly with him to do more to
19 condemn the violence.

20 Tell me your motivation for issuing this tweet?

21 A I knew I wasn't going to get through to anyone on the traditional means of
22 calling them or texting them and getting phone calls returned.

23 And one way to get in front of Donald Trump is both Twitter and television. And
24 I knew as soon as I tweeted this, I was the most senior former White House official to
25 directly call on Donald Trump to condemn it, or the first one to, it very quickly ended up

1 on FOX News and on CNN.

2 So I knew I was, like, this is a way to get it in front of it. I mean, A, it just needed
3 to be said, but that was my thought. I'm like, if I can -- how can I get this in front of his
4 eyes if nobody's taking my phone calls?

5 Q I see. So it sounds like, Ms. Griffin, you knew that as a recently departed
6 White House official this tweet would get picked up and that the President himself would
7 see this and that might move him or influence his rhetoric?

8 A That was my hope, that, yeah, that was the hope.

9 Q Did you take any steps to actually contact him or others in the White House
10 directly?

11 A Yes. So I contacted Meadows by phone call as well as text message, and I
12 called White House Signal and was never put through. It was a long shot. I didn't think
13 the President was going to take my phone call. And I --

14 Q Let me show you the Meadows text. It's exhibit 9. And this is just an
15 exhibit that we created, but it reflects your text directly to Mark Meadows. It's
16 January 6th and it looks like the time stamp -- sorry, Grant, if you can go back a little bit to
17 the time. It's at 3:13. So a little after 3 o'clock.

18 And now the language is -- and this is you directly to Meadows -- "POTUS has to
19 come out firmly and tell protesters to dissipate. Someone is going to get killed."

20 Again, was it -- kind of self-explanatory -- your desire to encourage Meadows to
21 tell the President to come out more forcefully and tell people to leave?

22 A Yeah. And I actually -- and maybe this was a Ben Williamson text. I
23 could've sworn I said to somebody that they should go to the sticks, if he was unwilling to.
24 I might've sent that to Ben, and I guess this is the -- but, yes, this was my point is, like,
25 Mark Meadows has, I think, half a million followers on Twitter. He has access to

1 cameras. Like, he could have said something.

2 There were so many ways this could have deescalated. And I just -- yeah. This
3 notion, as somebody who had many, many times been in the position of trying to
4 convince Donald Trump to walk something back via Twitter, we know that that's a
5 process that can take 5 hours, like, the George Floyd example I gave.

6 This was, like, an imminent violent crisis that was taking place that, like, we could
7 not wait on Trump to come around. And this is where I was hoping Meadows was going
8 to do something. I know reporters were texting him pleading with him, too.

9 Q Yeah. And, look, no one in the world knows better than you what the tools
10 are available to the President of the United States to instantaneously get out a message.

11 When you say "sticks," are you talking about go to a microphone, go to the
12 briefing room --

13 A Yeah. We called it --

14 Q -- and address the press corps?

15 A Yeah. We called it sticks where all the cameras are located at Pebble
16 Beach. There's just always mikes there and cameras. So at any moment you can walk
17 out of the West Wing and get on national television wall-to-wall.

18 Q Yeah. The text that you mentioned to Ben Williamson is No. 8.

19 Grant, if you can put that on the screen.

20 Because you do, Ms. Farah, text Ben Williamson, who -- is it your understanding
21 that he's in the White House at the time --

22 A Yeah. Yeah. He was -- yeah. And he sat in the chief's office, like -- or
23 next door to -- in, like, the broader office of the chief of staff.

24 Q So your message to Ben Williamson, who's in the chief of staff's office at
25 3:13: "Is someone getting to POTUS? He has to tell the protesters to dissipate.

1 Someone is going to get killed."

2 Williamson says, "I've been trying the last 30 minutes. Literally stormed into
3 Outer Oval to get him to put out the first one. It's completely insane."

4 You say, "Glad you're there. This is so scary. So many of our friends are inside
5 the building."

6 Williamson says, "It's terrifying. My phone is getting blown up from Capitol Hill,
7 Capitol people."

8 And you say, "Hang in there."

9 And then if you keep scrolling down, we get to the -- yeah. "He should call into
10 FOX and tell them to stand down and leave the Capitol." And that's at 3:30.

11 Again, self-explanatory, but fair to say you're encouraging Williamson to
12 encourage Meadows and the President to issue a more forceful statement?

13 A Yes, that's correct. Yeah. And Ben Williamson's long-time girlfriend was
14 in the Capitol.

15 But another -- I can't remember -- I don't think this is in the texts that we
16 have -- but I had also mentioned -- I can find it and send it for the record -- but I believe I
17 mentioned to Roma Daravi, who was our head of media relations, another option would
18 be, like, the Capitol is also wired that they can broadcast things.

19 So you also could've had him call in and work with the leader's office to have some
20 things that would actually message to the people in the Capitol.

21 But I was literally just, like, giving people ideas of, like, there are things to do other
22 than hand a paper to the President and hope he changes his mind.

23 Q Right. I think you provided the text.

24 It's exhibit 15, Grant, if you could.

25 This is the one with Sofia. Who is Sofia?

1 A Oh, so that's Sofia Kinzinger, who's Adam Kinzinger's wife. I included that
2 only because it moments before predates -- like, she, basically, makes the point people
3 are going to be killed. And then shortly after I sent the same verbiage to Meadows in
4 hopes of doing something.

5 Q Okay. Grant, can you call that one up? I think that was one of the new
6 ones we just received.

7 A She and I had been White House colleagues under Pence.

8 Q And it sounds like she's -- she's the gray. So she reaches out to you at 2:59.

9 "Allyssa, the President needs to deploy the National Guard. This is crazy. Please
10 text Meadows."

11 So this is someone -- she's still working in the White House at this time or she left?

12 A No. She'd been on the outside. We'd worked together with Pence and I
13 think she probably left in 2019.

14 Q I see.

15 A But obviously she was concerned because her husband's in the Capitol.

16 Q Yep.

17 A "I'm pleading with. He hasn't responded. I'm trying the President on
18 Signal."

19 Yeah. I just included that because that was -- these were the kind of messages I
20 was getting, feeling helpless in trying to reach anyone that I could to express how people
21 felt.

22 Q And what you say, Ms. Griffin, to her is, "I'm pleading with Meadows. He
23 hasn't responded. I'm trying the President on Signal." Is that a reference to that
24 Signal --

25 A White House Signal thing, yeah. As I was typing this, I was -- I remember

1 because I was in my in-law's kitchen -- I was trying -- I had just tried him on Signal and
2 then was typing to her. But I never got through to him.

3 Q I see. So you never communicated with the President on Signal or
4 otherwise?

5 A No.

6 Q And Mr. Meadows never got back to you in response to your text?

7 A No.

8 Q Did you call Meadows as well?

9 A Yeah. I called him quite a few times.

10 Q And didn't reach him?

11 A Yeah.

12 Q Okay.

13 A May I have a 2-minute break? I'm just going to grab a glass of water.

14 Q Absolutely. And we're going to finish in the next 30, 40 minutes.

15 A Perfect.

16 Q So, yeah, grab a glass of water. We'll take 2 minutes. That's fine.

17 [Recess.]

18 [REDACTED] All right. Mr. Schiff, I know you had a couple of questions. Why
19 don't you jump in?

20 Mr. Schiff. Thank you [REDACTED]

21 I just want to follow up on something that you said earlier that really struck me.

22 You were clarifying that when you had made some earlier comments in a press interview

23 that you didn't mean to suggest that you prophesied or could foresee that January 6th

24 was going to happen. But at the same time you went on to say, nevertheless, it was the

25 logical conclusion.

1 And I wonder if you can flesh that out for us a little bit. What led you to
2 conclude that the violence we saw on January 6th was, at the end of the day, the logical
3 conclusion of what had gone on before that?

4 Ms. Griffin. It's a great question and it's one I've spent a lot of time thinking
5 about.

6 Yes, in my mind, the big lie and the myths and the sort of chaotic press
7 conferences of the election was stolen that happened during that 90-day period, my
8 expectation was it was simply going to be detrimental to institutions and it was going to
9 create, like, even more political division and friction and be something where for years
10 we, the right and the left, could never agree on who actually won the election.

11 I did not think it would turn to violence and calling for the murder of my former
12 boss. That was, like, beyond the pale for me.

13 However, something that's been, like, a learning experience for me coming out of
14 Trump world is so many times, like, the obvious answer is right in front of us, but those of
15 us who wanted to see better in him would ignore it.

16 And then the example I'd give is, I remember as far back as, like, 2018, people
17 saying, if he lost would there be a peaceful transition of power? And my friend Mick
18 Mulvaney wrote an op-ed saying of course he would leave office. And we all really
19 believed that.

20 But, like, his actions always showed that he tended to do the worst imaginable
21 version of what he could've done. So I shouldn't have been surprised that it went this
22 far. I shouldn't have been surprised that he would turn on the man who was the most
23 loyal to him and stood by him through so many things.

24 And going to the point we discussed earlier, this is also a man who has many,
25 many times over shown sort of an affinity for violence if it's in -- if it's done out of loyalty

1 to him. You know, the knock him out and the different things we've seen at his rallies.

2 So I shouldn't have been surprised by it. And this is -- and it's part of why I'm
3 passionate about, like, continuing to tell the truth about him now is, like, this is a man
4 who will always do the worst thing. That's my perception having worked for him for the
5 period that I did. And we're honestly lucky that January 6th wasn't worse than it was.

6 I hope that answers your question.

7 Mr. Schiff. It does. And I just want to drill into it a little further.

8 You talked about how in Georgia the President's continuing push of this big lie
9 that the elections were rigged had the predictable impact of discouraging people to vote.
10 I mean, why vote if the elections are going to be rigged?

11 Was there a similar dynamic in pushing the big lie that people couldn't rely on our
12 elections because they were rigged, was there also a similar logic that, well, if you can't
13 rely on the elections, then what's left but to take matters into your own hands with
14 violence?

15 Ms. Griffin. I mean, I think that's kind of -- it's kind of the implication. That's
16 why I was -- I'm very bothered by the, like, it's rigged, you can't trust the system,
17 because you do -- I mean, I've gone to more Trump rallies than I care to admit and you
18 hear rhetoric from attendees about, like, no, it's all rigged, like this is -- and the logical
19 conclusion of that is, like, you need to stand up for your right to vote, you need to fight
20 for your right to vote.

21 And I think I said this at one point, but, like, especially with Ashli Babbitt, I mean,
22 this is a veteran who served her country in the Air Force, who believed people in a
23 position of public trust who said to her your vote was stolen, our democracy is being
24 stolen from us. People have fought wars over things like that.

25 I don't actually, like, in my heart fault somebody for thinking they were fighting for

1 their right to vote. But, of course, like, her actions were terrible, but it's ultimately on
2 the people in the position of public trust who lied to her and misled her and then it
3 resulted in a tragedy.

4 Mr. Schiff. Based on what you would hear when you attended these Trump
5 rallies, what you would hear the President's supporters saying that would echo the
6 President, did it surprise you that a number of the people who have now gone to trial
7 who were charged with offenses related to the 6th have explained that they thought that
8 they were following the President's orders and instructions?

9 Ms. Griffin. It doesn't surprise me that that's what they think. And it's classic
10 Trump to try to deny responsibility now after the fact.

11 But, I mean, I've seen how much his followers admire him and look up to him and
12 that they're captivated by him. It's, frankly, like, quite scary. And, yeah, those people,
13 I mean, they thought they were fighting for him. They thought they were fighting for
14 him, their right to vote, their country.

15 And we're not out of the woods by any means because there are still many, many,
16 many people in this country who believe his lie and who are still being misled by him and
17 those around him.

18 Mr. Schiff. And finally, you just reiterated the President's willingness to consider
19 or condone violence in support of his cause or his view.

20 If it meant violence would be necessary to maintain his position in office to stop
21 the joint session, is it your conviction that the former President would support the use of
22 violence on January 6th to do that?

23 Ms. Griffin. So yes is the simple answer. But to elaborate, I'm teaching at
24 Georgetown University this semester and I did a class with my students about the logical
25 conclusion of events had Pence not done the right thing on January 6th. And what it

1 inevitably would have been is militarizing our streets or the Department of Defense
2 resisting the President, creating all sorts of friction of our institutions. But the
3 conclusion is, it would have been outright violence in the streets of American cities.

4 And when I talk now looking forward, we are not out of the woods on this. I
5 know I don't, Congressman, I know I don't need to tell you this, but the man is very likely
6 going to be the nominee for -- the Republican nominee for President. He could be
7 President again and he will abuse every lever of power that he can. And he is not above
8 violence and threats and misusing and abusing power.

9 And I don't know that I think we're any closer to convincing the public of that than
10 we were on January 6th, unfortunately.

11 Mr. Schiff. That's a very sober assessment and not one I disagree with.

12 Thank you, [REDACTED] I yield back.

13 [REDACTED] Yeah. Thanks, Mr. Schiff.

14 [REDACTED]

15 Q Okay. Just a couple more things to finish the day, Ms. Griffin. I really
16 appreciate your patience and your willingness to spend this time with us. It's extremely
17 helpful.

18 We were talking about all the pressure that you were bringing to bear, trying to
19 bring to bear on Mr. Meadows and trying to reach the President himself.

20 He issues another tweet at 3:13. This is exhibit 10, and we can call it up. And
21 same question. We'll look at it together and I'll ask you for your reaction.

22 We are now over an hour and some into violence inside the Capitol and the
23 President's tweet is, "I'm asking for everyone at the U.S. Capitol to remain peaceful. No
24 violence. Remember, we are the party of law and order. Respect the law and our
25 great men and women in blue. Thank you."

1 Do you remember this? And what was your reaction?

2 A Yeah, remember it well, and it still didn't have the call to leave. I
3 remember thinking I'm like -- well, A, you can say you're the party of law and order and
4 that you respect the blue all you want, but police officers were being beaten with their
5 own battalions. But he also, like -- the message needed to be please leave the Capitol,
6 and we weren't there yet.

7 Q Yeah. And the word actually is "remain," right?

8 A Yeah, exactly.

9 Q [Inaudible] saying stay. Hey, by all means, stay, just don't use violence.
10 Don't assault law enforcement. But he didn't tell anybody to leave or forcefully try to
11 quell violence.

12 A Correct. Correct. And, yeah. And, I mean, and, of course, even by being
13 in the Capitol the way they were, they were breaching the law, they were breaching the
14 protocol and security restrictions.

15 But, yeah, he's literally saying remain and the one message he needed to deliver
16 was to leave.

17 Q Yeah. So it sounds like, Ms. Griffin, that after this now second tweet using
18 words like stay peaceful, remain peaceful, you then start to suggest that maybe Meadows
19 should make a statement.

20 Let's go to exhibit 11, which is a continuation of your text exchange with Ben
21 Williamson. And if you read a little further down, you change from encouraging a
22 Presidential statement to encouraging Meadows to say something.

23 Grant, if you could call up exhibit 11 for me.

24 And if you scroll all the way down to the bottom of this one, at 3:30, you say, "He
25 should" -- you start by talking about the President -- "He should call on FOX, tell them to

1 stand down and leave the Capitol."

2 Then you say, "I told the chief, he," the chief, "should get on camera or call in
3 20 minutes ago" -- I'm sorry.

4 A That's Ben, I think.

5 Q That's Ben. "I told the chief, he," Meadows, "should get on camera
6 20 minutes ago hoping it breaks through."

7 And you say, "100 percent. If POTUS won't, Mark must."

8 Tell us more why it is that you -- why are we focused now, shift focus to Mark
9 Meadows issuing a statement.

10 A So my assessment on was there were a limited number of voices that would
11 be powerful enough and influential enough with this mob at the Capitol to get them to do
12 anything. And it really, in my mind, was limited to, first and foremost, the President,
13 probably Meadows because he was seen as this sort of, like, conservative folk hero type
14 and had the President's ear.

15 And it's actually kind of my belief that I think Kayleigh probably could've helped
16 since she's a bit of a, like, icon within the conservative circles.

17 So my thought was, like, we don't have time to buy with the President, and Mark
18 could have gone out there, and he could've delivered the message that the President
19 wouldn't.

20 And to be honest, I would've even settled, he could've even still pretended the
21 election was stolen and just said, "I'm asking on behalf of President Trump, please leave
22 the Capitol, please stand down." Like, he didn't even need to be, like, a hero; he just
23 needed to say, like, don't do some -- don't be violent and leave the Capitol.

24 Q Yeah. Did you have any information at the time, Ms. Griffin, as to what the
25 President was doing in the White House? Did you hear from any of the folks there what

1 he, himself, the President, was doing as the riot unfolded?

2 A I didn't until after the fact in mine -- from talking to Sarah Matthews, who
3 was the deputy press secretary who resigned after January 6th. She told me that he was
4 just, like, watching from his dining room and there were a number of advisers in and out.
5 But the belief was that he was mostly enjoying it.

6 Q Yeah. And that came from Ms. Matthews? Anyone else give you that
7 impression of him enjoying what he was watching?

8 A It was only -- only heard that from Sarah, but she's kind of in the limited pool
9 of folks I still talk to.

10 Q I understand. Okay. All right.

11 Well, after your exchange with Mr. Williamson, you issued another tweet. Let's
12 look at that. That's exhibit 12, a series of tweets actually, where you go back on Twitter.
13 This is a little bit later now. It's 4 something, 4:52.

14 And you say, "Hey, Dear MAGA, I'm one of you." And you talk about your own
15 political lineage and your support for the conservative cause. And you say, "I need you
16 to hear me. The election was not stolen. We lost."

17 And then you go through, say, "Hey, there were legitimate cases that should be
18 investigated, but the margin of victory far too wide to change the outcome. You need to
19 know that." And you pivot to your accomplishments and looking to the future.

20 Tell me why you felt it was necessary for you that afternoon to issue this series of
21 tweets.

22 A I, one, I hoped that I could use my, like, credibility within the conservative
23 movement because of my background to get through to some people. My thought was,
24 if I can reach even one person in the Capitol and change their mind and get them to go
25 home, that's at least something.

1 You know, my original tack was to get on TV and hope that Trump maybe
2 condemns it. But this is trying to reach people on the level of like, guys, you've got to
3 know the election wasn't stolen.

4 Because you could see, I mean, we all saw the footage, people were outraged,
5 they were angry. Because they genuinely believed that. And I hoped that, like, my
6 credibility would help them realize, like, maybe this isn't -- this isn't true.

7 And I did try to take, like, a softer tone and be like a little bit pro-MAGA sounding.
8 But, I mean, it didn't -- nothing was going to stop people at that point.

9 Mr. Cooper. [REDACTED] Excuse me. Charles Cooper here. Do you mind
10 scrolling back up to the top of that?

11 [REDACTED] Sure. Yes.

12 So, Ms. Griffin -- sorry, Chuck. Go ahead.

13 Mr. Cooper. Thank you.

14 [REDACTED] Okay.

15 [REDACTED]

16 Q Ms. Griffin, it sounds like, much like the previous tweet, your intention is
17 that, given that you're a recently departed senior White House official, that this would be
18 something that would get picked up or would be reported and would be amplified by sort
19 of earned media.

20 A I hoped that either -- I hoped that people in the Capitol would see it. I
21 hoped that people on social media who were buying the big lie would see it.

22 Honestly, I felt super -- I felt extremely helpless like many of us. Like, I had very,
23 very close friends in the building and I was concerned for Pence and Marc and the other
24 people in the building.

25 And, like, I just wanted -- I was like, if I have any influence whatsoever I'm going to

1 use it. And I certainly didn't think I was going to be able to solely convince people to
2 stand down, but I thought that I should at least try to use my voice.

3 Q Yeah. Did you have any contact with Short or anybody with the Vice
4 President when they were in the Capitol that afternoon?

5 A Chris Hodgson and I texted, I believe.

6 Q Yeah. What do you remember about that?

7 A It must have been Hodge. I definitely texted with someone who was with
8 Pence and that he -- oh, and Zach Bauer, his body man, who's a good friend of mine.
9 He, basically, said, he's, like, listen, I've never been more proud of our guy. He's hanging
10 in there. He's, like, this is, like, unbelievable, but, like, it's, you know, we're hanging in
11 there kind of thing.

12 And after the fact, like, weeks after, I talked to Myles Cullen, who was the VP
13 photographer and who's a friend of mine, and he just kind of expressed the same thing.

14 Q Got it. Okay.

15 The President finally issues a video statement, which I'm sure you saw. It was
16 actually posted on Twitter. It was recorded in the Rose Garden. And I won't play it for
17 you, but I'll just -- it's short.

18 He says, "I know your pain. I know your hurt. We had an election that was
19 stolen from us. It was a landslide election and everyone knows it, especially the other
20 side. But you have to go home now."

21 The first time all afternoon that he's finally said disperse.

22 "We have to have peace. We have to have law and order. We have to respect
23 our great people in law and order. We don't want anybody hurt. It's a very tough
24 period of time."

25 And he goes back to the election stuff.

1 "There's never been a time like this where such a thing happened where they
2 could take it all away from us -- from me, from you, from our country. This is a
3 fraudulent election.

4 "But we can't play into the hands of these people. We have to have peace. So
5 go home. We love you. You're very special.

6 "You've seen what happens. You see the way that others are treated that are so
7 bad and evil. I know how you feel. But go home, and go home in peace."

8 You remember seeing that statement and what was your reaction to it?

9 A I remember thinking, I'm thinking like, after all these hours that's the best he
10 can do. And the second he reiterated the line of it being stolen, I was like you're trying
11 to put out a fire by putting gasoline on it, by reiterating the very reason people are
12 storming the Capitol.

13 I was appalled by it. I mean, allegedly, there are different takes of it --

14 Q Do you know anything about that? Did you hear from anybody about
15 multiple takes?

16 A So I had heard from people there were multiple takes. My advice was, I
17 don't -- the best way to get them would probably be to go through a White House
18 stenographer, because there would have been a stenographer -- there should have been
19 at least, but they never followed protocol, should have been there. Or White House
20 Digital, like Ory Rinat would've been the person shooting it most likely. I never saw
21 them.

22 Q The digital team would be responsible for coordinating sort of a video like
23 that that would be subsequently posted?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Okay.

1 A Yeah, that would have been Ory's team.

2 Q Did you hear from anybody inside the White House about who drafted or
3 informed the remarks?

4 A No.

5 Q Okay. Even after this, he's got one more tweet, and that is issued at 6:01.
6 We'll put that on the screen. It's exhibit 13. This is his last tweet of the day.

7 "These are the things and events that happen when a sacred landslide election
8 victory is so unceremoniously and viciously stripped away from great patriots who have
9 been badly and unfairly treated for slow long. Go home with love and in peace.
10 Remember this day forever."

11 Same questions. Remember this? And what was your reaction?

12 A Yeah. Just, I mean, just what a pathetic -- what a pathetic statement.
13 Yeah, if it's doubling -- it was doubling down on everything. Absolutely nothing was
14 learned or understood. And there was no acknowledgement -- I don't know at what
15 point we knew about injuries or deaths at this point, but no acknowledgement of Officer
16 Sicknick or the dozens of Capitol Police officers who were injured. So it just missed the
17 mark in every possible way.

18 Q Yeah. Earlier that afternoon, Ms. Griffin, Ivanka Trump had also tweeted
19 and used the term patriots, American patriots, and she was kind of immediately criticized
20 on Twitter for calling people at the Capitol patriots, so much so that she clarified and said,
21 peaceful protest is patriotic, not violence.

22 The President chooses the word patriot. Do you have any thoughts on that, on
23 the -- you're a person in this business and words matter, whether or not patriots was or
24 wasn't appropriate as a way to call people in this crowd?

25 A It definitely was not appropriate. Knowing to the degree that I do of Ivanka

1 and her team, I think because she was kind of getting ahead of the President and putting
2 out a condemnation before he'd really put one out, I think she felt like she had to couch
3 her language.

4 It's a very Ivanka Trump statement to do, like to say what needs to be said, but to
5 leave just a little bit to cater to the bad actors, unfortunately. I thought it was terribly
6 inappropriate to say patriots with the visuals of what was happening.

7 I appreciated the clarification, but it shouldn't have made it -- it never should have
8 made it on Twitter in the first place.

9 Q Did anybody share with you, Ms. Griffin, anything about her role that
10 afternoon in shaping messages or having communications with her father during the riot?

11 A Honestly, only stuff I've read about after the fact.

12 Q Yep. Okay.

13 Anything else that you heard about what was going on in the White House?
14 Who was pushing for what? Anything at all that you can share with us? I know you
15 weren't there, but given your contacts with folks even after the fact stuff you heard?

16 A Well, one thing -- the only thing I can think of was, it was shared with me
17 firsthand from someone in the press office that Kayleigh and other senior members of the
18 press team were discouraging encouraging a statement because they kept saying, we
19 don't know if this is our people, this is probably antifa.

20 So that gives a little bit of a sense of -- I mean, I guess it helps understand why
21 there maybe was a bit of a lag in time. That person ultimately said, like, these are our
22 people, they're carrying our flags.

23 So that was one perspective that was in the West Wing, I know.

24 Q Do you remember who you heard that from? Who shared with you that
25 there was some concern that this could have been antifa or others and

1 hesitant -- hesitancy to give a statement because of that?

2 A That was from Sarah Matthews.

3 Q Okay.

4 A And who's someone I trust a lot. And she ended up resigning the next day.

5 Q Yeah. Did she share with you her decision -- reasons for her decision?
6 What did she tell you about her decision to resign?

7 A Yeah. She called me that evening. I mean, she had been texting me
8 throughout the day. She'd worked on Capitol Hill for a long time. Then we spoke that
9 evening and I basically said, like, you have to follow your conviction, but, like, I support
10 you. We talked through together what her statement was going to be. And she put it
11 out, and just packed her things and left.

12 Q Got it.

13 A It was exactly why you could imagine someone would leave.

14 Q Yep. All right.

15 A Anything else you remember about the day of January 6th? Any texts,
16 communication, piece of information that you've learned since that might be in some way
17 helpful to the select committee?

18 A Not really. I think just the final point I'd really want to just put a finer point
19 on is there -- when you take a job in the White House, any job in the White House, but
20 especially senior roles, you are signing up for -- it's a position of public trust. You have
21 an obligation to the American people, not to the political figure you're working for.

22 A And I am just so gravely disappointed in all of the people who just decided to just
23 sit back and wait for someone else to do the right thing that day.

24 A And I just hope that, you know, I hope that we -- we deserve better future staff in
25 White Houses, because of course the buck stops with the President, the buck always

1 stops with him, but so many people around him who just didn't do enough disappoint
2 me. So --

3 Q Yeah. Sounds like you think he was underserved by the people around him.
4 It's his responsibility, but didn't get a lot of help from his staff.

5 A Correct. Yep.

6 Q You said it the next day, on January 7th, in an interview with Politico. "I
7 fundamentally do not respect how the President handled Wednesday's events. He
8 allowed lives to be put in danger and never adequately denounced the actions. A
9 strong, declarative, forceful statement from him could have stopped violence. It could
10 have saved lives. It's changed my belief that he should hold a future leadership
11 position."

12 Tell us more about that.

13 A Yeah, I completely stand by that. I've said it since then. But, I mean,
14 leaders are defined by their darkest hours, not their brightest moments. So as much as
15 he wants to say, "I oversaw this great economy, I did X, Y, and Z," that's all well and good.
16 At a moment that demanded Presidential leadership, you missed the mark entirely and
17 you left the country and our democracy hanging in the balance.

18 He is utterly unqualified to be in office. And I actually went on further on CNN to
19 say I would've supported invoking the 25th Amendment.

20 Q Yeah. Do you remember any discussions about the 25th Amendment? I
21 know you were gone, but did you hear about serious discussions about removing a
22 President from office using that provision?

23 A I didn't, unfortunately.

24 Q Yeah. You shared with us a text from the next day, an exchange you had
25 with Judd Deere.

1 We're almost done. Let's put that up on the screen, because you just gave that
2 one to us yesterday.

3 I think, [REDACTED] it's maybe 17.

4 This is Judd Deere, who I understand worked in the press office. And you're the
5 gray again. And this is Thursday, January 7th.

6 A No, I'm the blue in this one.

7 Q Oh, I'm sorry. This is from you. Okay. So Judd texts you, "Ugh. This is
8 beyond rough."

9 You say, "Hey, I know me speaking out doesn't make your life any easier. I just
10 had to do what I thought was right. I'm torn up over the last few days. But I'm proud
11 of you for staying and serving and glad good people are around POTUS."

12 He then says, "Thanks. I don't blame you one bit. It's been a real struggle."

13 Grant, if you keep scrolling.

14 "I was asked several times today to comment on things you said. I declined.
15 Twelve days to go. And peace and unity need to prevail."

16 A Yeah.

17 Q So tell me what made you reach out to -- actually, you reached out to him
18 January 8th at 5:47.

19 A Yeah.

20 Q Why?

21 A I only -- I really -- and I shared this because there were a few good people
22 around the President and some of them were actually, like, fairly junior. I think Judd
23 was probably like 27 years old at this time. He was a deputy press secretary.

24 But you -- I think that there can sometimes be a narrative in the media of, like,
25 everyone should've just walked and there -- that is a valid thing, but you needed a couple

1 good people to keep, like, the wheels on.

2 I sent this because I had, like, done the CNN, FOX, and NBC, and I had been
3 previously in Judd's position where, like, a former speaks out against the President and
4 you're just getting inundated. And he was my friend, and I just felt like I needed
5 to -- not to explain myself. I didn't need to, but I wanted to because I cared about him.

6 And I was glad he stayed because Judd actually, despite being young and on the
7 more junior side, I saw him push back a number of times on the President. And I had
8 heard that he was who ultimately got, like, the "go home" or whatever tweet to go out,
9 so -- and someone who it's better to have him there than to not, I think.

10 Q Yeah. And you got a favorable response. He doesn't blame you at all.
11 He kind of candidly admits that he himself has been struggling and that he hopes peace
12 and unity prevail.

13 Have you -- it sounds like you haven't spoken to President Trump at all since you
14 left the White House. Is that right?

15 A Yeah. I haven't spoken to him since -- yeah, it would have been -- yeah,
16 since I left the White House.

17 Q How about Vice President Pence? Have you talked to him?

18 A Yes, just a handful of times.

19 Q Has he shared with you anything about his experience on January 6th or this
20 whole series of events that we've been talking about?

21 A No. He, like Marc Short, plays it very close to the chest. He just checked
22 in on me. He wasn't -- like, he was invited to my wedding, but wasn't able to make it.

23 He dances around it, but just basically said thank you for your support following
24 January 6th kind of thing, but hasn't said anything beyond that.

25 Q Right. Has anybody reached out to you, Ms. Griffin, about your

1 cooperation with the select committee, either to encourage or discourage it -- and I don't
2 want to talk about your lawyer, keep those conversations to yourself -- but don't feel any
3 pressure either way to do or not do what you're doing today?

4 A No. I'm, as I've mentioned, I'm, like, persona non grata with most of Trump
5 world, so they really only reach out to me to harass me or put out statements attacking
6 me. So I'm -- they wouldn't have any sway in the matter.

7 Yeah. So no one's encouraged or discouraged me. I think extremely highly of
8 Congressman Kinzinger and Congresswoman Cheney, so I wanted to be helpful to them in
9 their efforts.

10 Q Yeah. How, if at all, has the criticism that the former President and others
11 have made about you publicly changed your perspective on any of this?

12 A If anything, it -- I'll tell you this. If anything, it makes it even more
13 perplexing to me why so many people have such a hard time speaking out against him.

14 I'm a 32-year-old woman. I'm, you know, in the grand scheme of things just kind
15 of a random person and he goes after me, and it's really just not the end of the world.

16 So I'm shocked to see how many elected Republicans are so afraid of being
17 denounced by him. It just kind of exposes a level of cowardice.

18 I will say this, though, I do think this is important to mention. When he attacks
19 me, I do get death threats. I've gotten quite a few. Very specific, very violent. I've
20 reported them all.

21 But, like, his words matter. And he doesn't care. The team around him who
22 sign off on the statements that he puts out against people like me, people like
23 Congresswoman Cheney, he knows it results in these kind of things and he just does not
24 care.

1

2 [2:13 p.m.]

3 [REDACTED]

4 Q Yeah. Words matter, as we've seen with everything we've been talking
5 about.

6 A Uh-huh.

7 Q Anything else, Ms. Griffin, at all, that I haven't asked you, that we haven't
8 asked you, that you think might be relevant?

9 A I don't think so. I appreciate the work you guys are doing. If anything
10 comes up, Chuck and I will be in touch, but I think I covered it all.

11 Q Yeah.

12 [REDACTED] Let me see if, [REDACTED] if you have anything in the
13 conference room that you want to ask.

14 [REDACTED] Thank you, Tim.

15 Ms. Griffin, I know you need to go. You have a 3 o'clock, but do you have, I don't
16 know, 10 or 15 more minutes?

17 Ms. Griffin. Why not?

18 [REDACTED] Thank you. I appreciate it.

19 Ms. Griffin. Absolutely not. I'm just kidding. Yeah. If we could get through
20 it pretty quick, though. If we could try to be out by 2:30, that would be great.

21 [REDACTED] Absolutely. Yep. Let's do that.

22

BY [REDACTED]

23 Q Earlier, you mentioned a meeting at the White House with Michigan
24 legislatures -- legislators. Excuse me. I think you said it didn't go quite as planned. I
25 was hoping you could give us a little bit more insight. What do you remember about

1 when those legislators from Michigan came and met with the President after the
2 election?

3 A So, to be honest, not much firsthand knowledge of it; more what was
4 publicly reported.

5 Q Okay.

6 A Just simply that they had kind of like made an agreement amongst
7 themselves that they weren't going to be swayed by him, and -- and I remember thinking
8 that he was ill-advised by his, like, State and local team, who should have been able to
9 brief him that, like, you're not going to get these people to just throw out their electors or
10 whatever he was attempting to have them do.

11 Q Okay. And do you remember other meetings at the White House or other
12 State legislators who came as well in the month of November and maybe into early
13 December? Just trying to get a perspective if you knew why, why the President was so
14 interested in meeting with State legislators at that time.

15 A So I don't remember other meetings, and this is probably because it would
16 have been overlapped with my prolonged Thanksgiving. But I do obviously recall
17 Meadows going to Georgia, and I remember being very confused by that, because I think I
18 was trying to reach him on -- about the Georgia Senate runoff, which I was advising. But
19 then I found out he was in Georgia dealing with like relitigating the election and meeting
20 with the secretary of State. So I remember that one fairly distinctly, but I don't think I
21 have any insight that's not already public.

22 Q Okay. And what about State legislators? ██████████ asked you about
23 alternate electors and getting all that done, but what about just the President's
24 understanding or desires to challenge the election through State legislators, having them
25 take some kind of action? Do you remember hearing anything about that?

1 A So, honestly, no. I've heard more about it looking forward. And this is
2 something I try to warn people about now. I think that they actually like -- 2020 was
3 sort of a trial run for them of learning how they could misuse or abuse the different levers
4 of government to hold on to power, because now I -- there's -- that the President's
5 endorsing secretaries of State -- former President -- secretaries of State races, like
6 Jody Hice from Georgia, but also playing in State house races, which usually a President
7 wouldn't get down into that level of politics.

8 So no is the answer. I don't know anything about it from that perspective, but I
9 know, going forward, he's already trying to prepare for another potential steal of the
10 election.

11 Q And what about John Eastman? Do you ever remember hearing
12 John Eastman's name when you were working in the White House?

13 A No, not until the crazy memo came out.

14 Q All right. And after that memo came out, did you ever remember anything
15 about him calling, trying to reach anybody, talking to Mark Meadows, anything at all?

16 A No.

17 Q Okay.

18 A He just wasn't someone I had even heard of before.

19 Q You mentioned a few times today General Flynn, Ms. Powell, Cleta Mitchell,
20 Rudy Giuliani. Taking those one by one, what was your understanding of the President's
21 relationship with General Flynn?

22 A So they were -- they were close. So I joined -- just sort of going back a little
23 bit, I joined Pence shortly after Flynn was fired, and the reason he was fired was
24 because -- fired was because he lied to Mike Pence. You guys may recall this from like
25 early 2017 --

1 Q Uh-huh.

2 A -- about being investigated by the FBI.

3 Trump had this like die-hard respect for him, an affinity for him. He really loves
4 generals, except when they disagree with him. And Flynn, he held in particularly high
5 regard, for whatever reason.

6 And there were -- I mean, there had even been talk at early on me going -- I think
7 probably like April or so, but, like, when I went back to the White House, when he was
8 going through his whole should I fire Esper, should I fire Esper, talking about wanting to
9 make Flynn Defense Secretary, and everyone's like, that will never -- he'll never get
10 through Senate confirmation.

11 Q Okay.

12 A But that's -- he holds him in very high regard would be my answer for Flynn.
13 Sidney Powell, I actually never -- I don't know that I ever heard him talk about her
14 or express a viewpoint, but she was -- she was actually very instrumental in those -- those
15 final weeks.

16 Q What's your understanding of what Ms. Powell, Mr. Flynn, Cleta Mitchell
17 were doing in that post-election period to challenge the election?

18 A I think there were a lot of different sort of maybe parallel tracks. Like, I
19 always knew of Cleta Mitchell to be like a fairly reputable attorney, and I have never
20 thought of her to be, like, insane. I don't know what she was specifically pushing for,
21 but it was obviously wildly inappropriate that she be on that Georgia call.

22 Flynn -- or Powell, Flynn, Mike Lindell, that, to me, is like -- that's full-fledged
23 conspiracy theorists. I mean, they've -- their public remarks speak for
24 themselves -- themselves. I don't even know that there was any kind of a coherent
25 strategy, because it would go from, like, Dominion voting machines to like something in

1 Germany, to, you know, their boxes are being destroyed. There was never a coherent
2 legal theory.

3 And then there was also Jenna Ellis and Rudy, which was kind of their own little
4 sort of like sideshow.

5 Q Were you -- were you in any meetings with any of them?

6 A Not postelection, no.

7 Q What about with Mr. Giuliani or Jenna Ellis?

8 A Never postelection, no.

9 Q Okay. Do you remember hearing anything --

10 A Nothing postelection -- very little postelection.

11 Q Okay. Do you remember hearing anything about a desire to seize voting
12 machines? You mentioned Dominion voting machines and theories related to them, but
13 what about, specifically, somehow the campaign or the President seizing election voting
14 machines?

15 A I definitely heard of it. I could have sworn he might have tweeted it or
16 something. I could be wrong in that.

17 Q Okay. But nothing --

18 A I definitely heard talk of the President wanting to seize voting machines, or
19 maybe he -- I think he wanted DOD to do it.

20 Q Do you remember hearing about that when you were working in the White
21 House or just from what was publicly reported?

22 A It's honestly blurry to me if -- when I would have heard of it.

23 Q Okay.

24 A Sorry.

25 Q While you were still there, some of the President's post-election rallies or

1 rallies related to the election started occurring. One rally occurred on November the
2 14th, which was a Saturday, in Washington, D.C. And I believe the President ended up
3 deciding to drive by it and waving at the protesters. I'll represent to you that that rally
4 ended up turning violent, and I believe a few people were stabbed after it.

5 Do you remember any discussions within the White House in that post-election
6 period about the potential for violence at any of these rallies or what to do if rallies
7 related to the election do turn violent?

8 A No. I remember that rally, but I don't recall any discussions around dealing
9 with violence or, yeah, plans for if they got violent.

10 Q Do you remember anything about the President's decision to drive by that
11 rally?

12 A No.

13 Q Okay. Do you remember anything about, like, planning or anything else
14 about that rally that was discussed within the White House?

15 A No. Honestly, I'd forgotten that he drove past it, but, no, I wasn't privy to
16 any of that.

17 Q All right. And just before you left -- this is about December 1st -- Lin Wood,
18 another person who's been involved in various post-election issues, he tweeted or
19 publicly mentioned -- I can't remember what -- but he talked about martial law and using
20 the Insurrection Act in some way related to the election.

21 Do you remember any discussions with campaign folks or people in the White
22 House about either martial law or the Insurrection Act related to the election?

23 A Not related to the election, no. We've -- Insurrection Act came up during
24 George Floyd but was knocked down. But I did not hear in that context.

25 Q Do you remember, in that context -- in the summer protests, do you

1 remember Stephen Miller talking about the martial law or the Insurrection Act?

2 A Yes. He was an advocate for it. Yeah. He -- he was pushing for it.
3 Derek Lyons, the staff secretary, was pushing for it, as were a number of other
4 individuals.

5 Q And do you know if Mr. Miller and Mr. Lyons pushed for it directly with the
6 President?

7 A Yeah. So I remember distinctly Derek Lyons, who I previously considered to
8 be maybe like an ally in the White House -- he had been a Jeb guy. He's a Harvard
9 lawyer. I'm like this is somebody who I can expect to make -- to have good
10 judgment -- walked into Kayleigh McEnany's office, where I was, and said, I wanted to
11 show you something, and it was draft text of invoking the Insurrection Act.

12 And I said, whoa, whoa, whoa, like, pump the brakes. What are we doing?

13 And he said, I'm about to brief the President on this.

14 He went in, briefed the President. The President liked it, and he kept saying he
15 liked the sound of it. I think he thought it sounded tough, like the Insurrection Act.
16 But he held off on doing anything.

17 And then 2 days later was when the meeting happened where Milley, Barr, Pence,
18 and everyone were present. Esper was there. I was there. Stephen Miller was there.
19 And Milley and AG Barr talked him out of doing it. But Stephen and Derek were big
20 advocates of it.

21 Q Okay. And my final question, going back to something you said, you
22 thought you remembered hearing from, I believe, Cassidy Hutchinson, or some Cassidy,
23 that the President -- or excuse me -- Mark Meadows had a call with Leader McCarthy
24 about ultimately getting the President to come around.

25 Did you ever hear what happened in that call, like what -- what Leader McCarthy

1 said, what the White House side said?

2 A No. I never heard the actual details. It was Cassidy Hutchinson. I'd
3 simply heard that he called McCarthy and -- or McCarthy called him -- I don't know which
4 direction -- and basically McCarthy was saying like, how are we going to get him to come
5 around? What's the plan? Do we have a plan? And Mark did the whole, like, don't
6 worry, I'm going to bring him around, going to bring him around. And that was about
7 the gist of it.

8 Q Okay.

9 [REDACTED] All right. That's all I had. Six minutes to spare. I appreciate it.
10 Thank you, Ms. Griffin.

11 Ms. Griffin. Of course.

12 [REDACTED] All right. Again, Ms. Griffin, thank you so much. And if there's
13 anything else that you -- anything else you want to say, please do, or that's an open offer.
14 If you have other things that you think of, please, through Mr. Cooper, feel free to reach
15 out to us.

16 Ms. Griffin. Wonderful. Well, thank you guys so much for the work you're
17 doing.

18 [REDACTED] Yep. And thanks again for being here.

19 Mr. George. Thank you.

20 [REDACTED] Again, Chuck, thank you for facilitating. We really appreciate it.

21 Mr. Cooper. Yes, sir. Thank you, [REDACTED]

22 [REDACTED] All right.

23 Mr. Cooper. I'll give you a call, Alyssa.

24 Ms. Griffin. Okay.

25 [REDACTED] Okay. Have a good weekend. Thank you.

1 Mr. Cooper. Bye now.

2 Ms. Griffin. Bye.

3 [Whereupon, at 2:25 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

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Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

I have read the foregoing ____ pages, which contain the correct transcript of the answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

Witness Name

Date